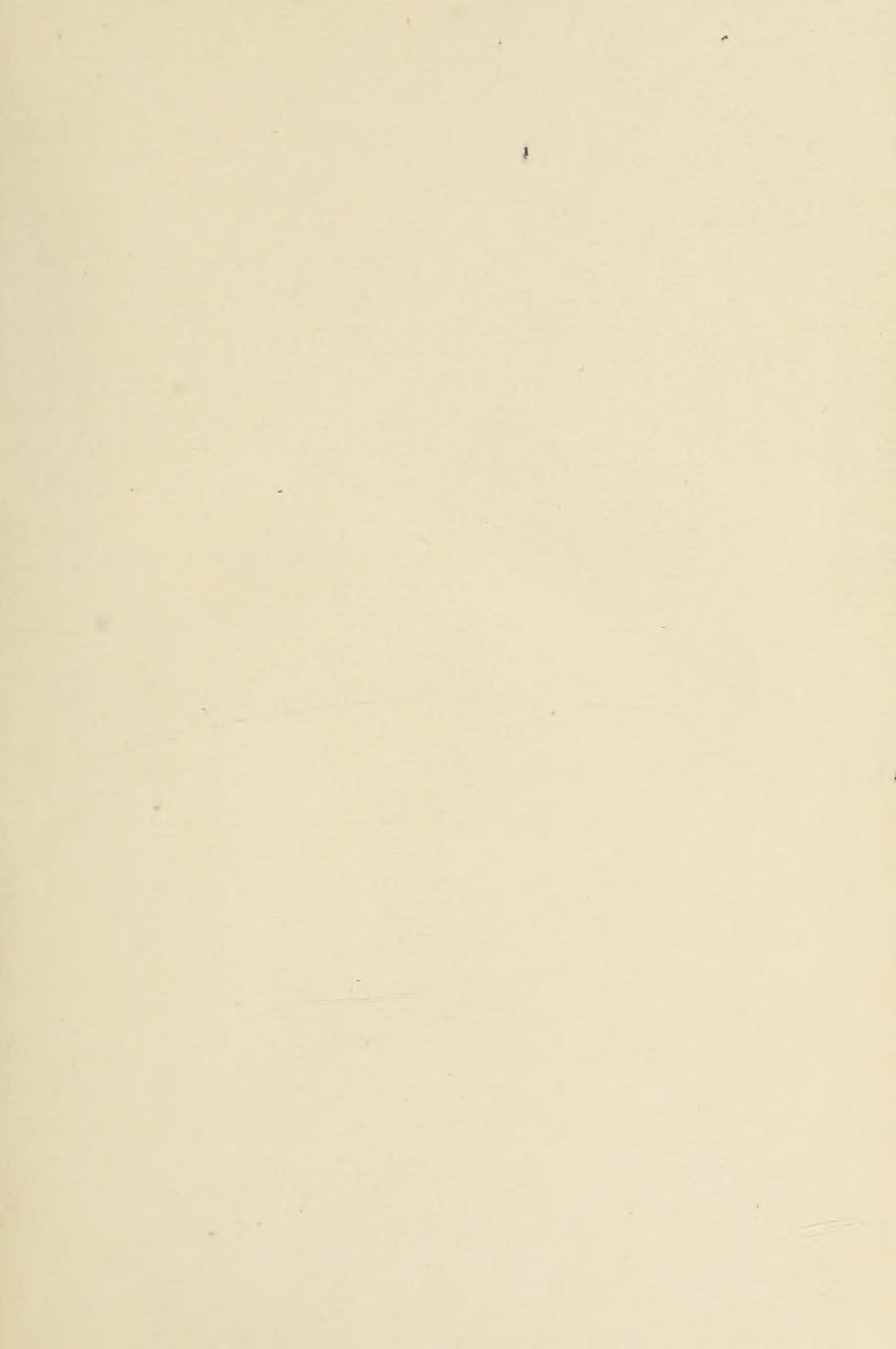


DURUY'S HISTORY
OF
ROME







HISTORY OF ROME

AND

THE ROMAN PEOPLE.



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SAINT HELENA AND S. GREGORY NAZIANZEN

HISTORY OF ROME,

AND OF THE ROMAN PEOPLE,

FROM ITS ORIGIN TO THE INVASION OF THE
BARBARIANS.

By VICTOR DURUY,

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AND NUMEROUS CHROMO-LITHOGRAPHS.

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HISTORY OF ROME.

ELEVENTH PERIOD.

THE AFRICAN AND SYRIAN PRINCES (180–235 A.D.).

(CONTINUED.)

CHAPTER XC. (*Continued.*)

THE CHURCH AT THE BEGINNING OF THE THIRD CENTURY.

II.—TRANSFORMATION OF THE MESSIANIC IDEA.

IN the midst of the confusion of systems and rites, Christianity had already, in the time of Severus, made for itself a large place. Springing up in a country for centuries condemned to every misery, it arose at once out of despair and hope. Since the captivity, the Jews had always expected the mighty hand which should restore the house of David. But in face of this Roman Empire, which was to them impregnable, it was inevitable that the Messianic idea should undergo a transformation. Cursing the present, they had looked for the future in the one direction only by which, as it now seemed to them, this future could arrive,—towards the heaven which should raise up a Messiah, the Saviour of the race. The earthly conqueror, vainly expected, had given place to the conqueror of souls; the New Jerusalem became a celestial Jerusalem.

Up to this time, humanity had honored its gods with a selfish worship, in the hope of obtaining worldly advantages from them, or of appeasing their anger; now, an ideal of justice, of goodness, and of love being offered to it, a new sentiment—the love of

God — sprang up in the human heart. This God had been revealed to the faith of the lowly when, in place of a promise of national triumph, they accepted a hope of spiritual life; and this faith was destined to win even the proudest natures, showing them the desired Mediator in the Divine Man, not ascending from earth to heaven like the Olympians, with all the stains of earth upon him, but coming down from heaven to earth with a celestial purity and an infinite strength of love. The heathen had long sought a mediator between the Creator and the creature, they had even seemed to have a glimpse of such a being; but never under



JESUS BETWEEN TWO APOSTLES IN THE ATTITUDE OF ADORATION.¹

this aspect of Jesus, who is so divine because so human,—a God dying upon the Cross to redeem the world; the Mediator who is at the same time the Redeemer. From a doctrinal point of view the whole of the Christian religion is embodied in this conception; outside of this are only means of action to apply the principle and develop its consequences.

The masters of the Roman world gained nothing by the transformation of Jewish ideas into Christian, resulting from this new conception of the expected Messiah. The prophets had announced to all the mighty that they should fall under the sword of Israel;

¹ From a sarcophagus at Arles, which serves as altar-front in the church of St. Trophimus. Christ, seated upon a *scallops*, his head surmounted by the cruciform monogram, is giving his law (in the form of an unrolled volume) to the two Apostles. Cf. E. Le Blant, *Études sur les sarcophages de la ville d'Arles*, pl. xxvii, and p. 41.

the Sibyl and Saint John condemned them to perish, with their gods of wood and all their sensual delights, in the flames kindled by the divine wrath, while those who overcame the powers of darkness received the promise of immortality.¹ Yet in a political point of view this promise disengaged Christianity, in the first phase of its existence, from all earthly ambition. It would seem that, spreading, with its principles of human equality and community of goods, among the destitute classes, it must have introduced a spirit of revolt. But by a fatal exaggeration of the teaching of indifference in which, for four centuries, all the philosophies had united,² the primitive Church added to its fundamental dogma of redemption a contempt for the present life,—which, however, had its share in the redemption of humanity. If this was not the sentiment of its first hour, we shall see that it was, at least to many, that of its second.

Pre-occupied with heaven, and the rewards in reserve for his faith, the Christian did not envy the worldlings their riches and their enjoyments. He left the things of earth as he found them, because existence here below was to him only a life of trial, the earliest termination of which would be the best; while the other, that beyond the tomb, was the true life, and ardently desired. “Let him fear to die whom hell awaits,” said Saint Cyprian; “but the Christian, inmate of a house whose walls are tottering and whose roof is trembling, passenger on board a vessel which the waves are about to engulf, why should he not bless the hand which, hastening his departure, restores him to heaven, his own country?”³ Christianity did not, then, change the conditions of life, but it changed the conditions of death; and this new solution of the terrible problem was of itself the greatest of revolutions.

Notwithstanding the temptation, which always exists, to demand of death its secret, the ancients had contented themselves with

¹ Laetantius (*Div. Inst.* iii. 12) terminates his search for the sovereign good by these words: *Id vero nihil aliud potest esse quam immortalitas.*

² Indifference to civic duties, and disdain for worldly good, were the lessons of the New Academy and Zeno, of Pyrrho and Epicurus. “Christianity will adopt as its own all these sentiments of aversion: it will show even more disdain for political action; it will preach indifference with greater ardor, and it will crown all its contempt by despising the very philosophy which had already taught contempt for all else; and the more thoroughly to withdraw the soul from earth, the Christian religion will offer to humanity only that good which is not of this world” (*Martha, Lucrèce*, p. 200).

³ *De Mortalitate*, 25.

admitting, without much argument on the subject, a vague existence beyond the grave.¹ In those old days life was rude; to lose it was often to gain rest and peace.—*requiem aeternam* is the language of the Church to this day. It was the time when Greece represented death under the form of a beautiful sleeping boy, whose drooping hand held an inverted torch. But mind becomes developed; conscience is enlightened, and projects gleams of light into the darkness of the tomb. Thither men are followed by the same justice which society, in becoming civilized, seeks to establish upon the earth. Rewards for the good are placed there, and chastisements for the wicked, as is the case in the forum before the praetor; and that judgment of the dead which Homer reserved for heroes is extended to all men. The city of shades becomes populous and civilized, like the city of men. The Elysian life is submitted to the moral laws of recompense, and its pleasures, depicted on funeral monuments, continue those of the life on earth. It is to this point of equality between the two existences that the Graeco-Roman philosophy had brought the eschatology of the pagans.

But the movement, once begun, does not stop. The development of religious thought pursues its course, and the equilibrium between the two existences is destroyed: heaven prevails over earth, the future life over the present; the latter condemned and cursed, the former glorified and awaited with impatience.

After having blindly sought for the Divinity in the religions of Greece, Phrygia, Egypt, and Phoenicia, the Romans had seen coming to them a new God who went to the hearts of the refined and the afflicted. There were many souls whom the gross naturalism of the state religion offended; and in spite of the mitigation of servitude, slavery was still to this society a bleeding

¹ To the present day, man has been able to find but three solutions to the problem of death. The soul, the vital spark, returns and loses itself in the centre of universal life: this is the *Nirvâna* of India, and indifference to personal existence; or it goes to enjoy with delight the same pleasures which it has possessed upon earth: this is the love of physical life, the Graeco-Roman and Mohammedan solution; or else, in an eternal rapture, it will contemplate God face to face: this is divine love, but also a sort of annihilation in God. Science has a different dream: since nothing is lost, thought must subsist as force; separated from the body, — its imperfect organ, — it will endure, and intelligence will arrive at the knowledge of all things. This is for humanity that which takes place in the individual; the need of knowing succeeding the need of loving. But perfect science is the perfect knowledge of the true, the good, and the beautiful, — that is, of God himself; and unto that he will attain in the higher life who shall have made the greatest effort to approach to it in the present life.

wound in its side. And now, behold hope is brought to these “desperate classes,” as Pliny calls them;¹ but not that of earth. The old abode which sunlight and life made once so beautiful, has become a vale of tears which the divine vengeance is about to fill with lamentations; and the habitation of the dead, formerly so chill and sombre, is now the celestial Jerusalem, radiant with youth, brightness, and love, where pious souls shall dwell eternally: “The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven. . . . They shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send forth his angels . . . and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. . . . Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all these things be accomplished.”

GENIUS OF SLEEP OR OF DEATH.²

¹ . . . *Coli rura ab ergastulis pessimum est et quidquid agitur a desperantibus.* We have seen what was the condition of the *humiliores*, and for the immense class of the freedmen, the ordinance of Commodus. (See Vol. VI. p. 559, note 1.) In the middle of the third century Origen regarded as an honor to Christianity the reproach which Celsus and the pagan of the *Oetarius* made against it,—of recruiting itself among men of low condition. “Yes,” said he, “we go to all those disdained by philosophy, — to the woman, to the slave, even to the robber.” In doing so, the Christians were faithful to the pure doctrine of the Master, who was so great because he loved the little ones. In the fourth century Saint Jerome said again: *Ecclesia Christi de rili plebecula congregata est* (*Opera*, iv. 289, ed. of 1693). The paintings of the catacombs prove the very humble condition of the artists who executed them, and of the dead who had ordered them.

² Oxford, Marm. Oxon. pl. 15. See Vol. V. p. 559, the Genius of Death of the Louvre.

The generation passed, and the earth was not destroyed. But the Sibyl and the prophets of the Apocalypse constantly renewed the fearful menace, which was a promise of endless torments for the haughty masters of the earth, and of eternal bliss for their victims.¹ "These unfortunate men," says a writer of the time, speaking of the Christians, "fancying to themselves that they are immortal, despise punishments, and voluntarily give themselves up to death."² The love of heaven led them to hatred of earth; they henceforth had before their eyes only "God and Eternity, with their tremendous majesty."

The true character of the revolution which took place in the obscure depths of Roman society is found in this new view of our destiny much more than in moral reformation, since humanity had already, as we have shown,³ been put in possession of all the precepts which are needed to regulate this world's existence. Life was purified, but became gloomy in the living tomb where those confined it who pushed this revolution to its logical consequences; and the Roman magistrates, not being able to see beyond its outward manifestations, found in them the two things which form the grand drama of persecutions,—contempt of human society and its laws, which raised up executioners; and love of death, which made victims.

This hatred of the flesh, which the ancient Jews had not known, but which philosophy taught,—this aspiration after death, so contrary to the conception which paganism had formed of life,—could not have been produced except in a small number of stricken and suffering souls. But the heaven, resplendent with light, which Christianity opened to their gaze; its teachings, which addressed themselves to the noblest instincts of the conscience; the penetrating sweetness of the parables, and the grand poem of the Passion,—won all those in whom were found the two most potent faculties of our being: sentiment and imagination. And, along

¹ St. Matthew xxiv. 29-34; Origen, *Contra Celsum*, vii. 9.

² Lucian, *Perigrinus*, 13. See in Vol. V. p. 497, what Marcus Aurelius said of the Christians. Epictetus, Galen, and the advocate of paganism in the *Octavius* say the same.

³ In Vol. VI., chapter on "Ideas." M. Reuss, in his *Histoire de la théologie chrétienne au siècle apostolique*, says very justly (p. 650): "The main point is that the originality of the Gospel consists not so much in the novelty of certain dogmas or of certain moral precepts as in the novelty of the basis which it gives to the religious life."

GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE SECOND FLAVIAN HOUSE.

CRISPUS, BROTHER OF THE EMPEROR CLAUDIUS II.

CLAUDIA, wife of the Dardanian Eutropius.

CONSTANTIUS CHLORUS marries: 1. HELENA, ancestress of the elder branch; 2. THEODORA, ancestress of the younger branch.

Elder Branch.

Constantius Chlorus and Helena.

Constantine the Great marries: 1. Minervina; 2. Fausta.

Younger Branch.

Constantius Chlorus and Theodora.

Crispus, killed in 326.

1, Constantine II.,
killed in 340.
2, Constantius II.,
died in 361,
leaving a daughter
who marries
the Emperor Gratian.

3, Constans,
killed in 350.

4, 5, and 6,
three daughters,
of whom one, Constantina,
marries Hannibalianus;
then Gallus;
another, Helena, marries
the Emperor Julian.

3, Constantius,
consul in 335,
killed in 337,

4, Constantia marries,
in 313, the
Emperor Licinius;

a son of this marriage
is killed by order
of Constantine
the Great.

1, Galla; 2, Basilina.

2, Hannibalianus,
King of Pontus,
killed in 337.

6, Eutropia marries
the consul Nepotianus.
Flavius Popilius
Nepotianus, Emperor
in 350, killed after
28 days' reign.

1. A son, killed in
337.
2, Gallus, son of Galla,
killed in 354.

3, A daughter,
without posterity.
4, Julian, son of Basilina.
Emperor in 361.

with these allurements, what terrors did these men wield whose words appropriated the terrible beauty of the prophetic singers of the old dispensation, or the apocalyptic threatenings of the new, when they announced the speedy coming of the last days; when they portrayed empires destroyed, worlds reduced to dust, the trumpet of the judgment resounding in the valley of Jehoshaphat, and man endowed with immortal life, either for happiness or for misery!

Never had the world known such sanctions of moral action;¹ and they were produced at an epoch when the unvarying order of Nature was regarded as the plaything of angels and devils, who hovered about man, scattering his pathway with temptations which his own frailty created, or with prodigies which he beheld with the eyes of a mind dazzled by faith or fear.

Under Diocletian a farce was played, entitled, *The Testament of the Defunct Jupiter*. Of this we know only the title; but a poet of our own day has represented the god, who had so long made heaven and earth quake with his thunderbolts, broken down with age, decrepit, yet with a remnant of majesty, and banished far from mankind on a desert island, where he tries in vain to warm his shrunken hands before a pitiful fire of briars and thorns. The poet and the philosopher, who know how to estimate the grandeur of the fall, have at least a word of compassion for the outcasts of heaven. Religions, less generous, pursue with lively hatred those whom they have conquered; they take from them their power for good, and give them that for evil. The Christians still believed in the existence of the gods of paganism and in the prodigies performed in their temples; but they transformed these masters of the old world into devils infuriated for the destruction of the new. To conduct this war against humanity, they gave to these fallen divinities a chief who had as yet been known only among the Chaldaeans, in Persia, and to some extent in Judaea.² Thus Satan, who was destined to play so important a part in the

¹ The Apocalypse has created a new kind of oratory, by placing at the disposal of the Christian priest the terrors of hell and the bliss of paradise. Paganism never had anything like this.

² Satan is hardly mentioned thrice in the Old Testament. The book of Wisdom, in which he appears in his true character, was written, shortly before the Christian era, at Alexandria. [This is not true in the case of Job. — ED.]

Middle Ages, began his reign; he turned to evil the most legitimate pleasures, concealed a snare in all the magnificence of Nature, and spread terror over the earth, now become his kingdom. That which is within us.—these frailties and vices which a determined will keeps in restraint, which a vacillating will suffers to develop.—all this was made external, and the universe filled with malignant beings, who were in reality but part of ourselves. Humanity became twofold, and trembled before its own image; and the Christian, who believed himself perpetually surrounded by temptations to mortal sin, said with Saint John: “He that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.”¹

This doctrine of despair is as enduring as that of hope, because humanity must always have its sufferings and its diseased minds who can see only the sorrows of existence and cannot comprehend a Providence which permits evil to fall upon the innocent. For many centuries the votaries of Çâkyamuni have taught in the East to countless multitudes that life is the one evil, and the Alexandrians had just repeated that men ought to aspire to death as to deliverance.² The Jewish Preacher also uttered this melancholy cry, to which some fibre in every human soul seems to respond, “All is vanity.” And the cry has found an echo in all times: in the Middle Ages, in the full tide of the century of Louis XIV., and even in the midst of our clamorous and busy life. We have the poets and philosophers of malediction, Leopardi and Hartmann;³ while the Carthusians and the Trappists represent to us, under a religious form, weariness or ignorance of the world, the spirit of hatred towards the flesh, and that poetry of solitude at once bitter and sweet. To them, whether philosophers or anchorites, the sombre bride is always beautiful; and, from contrary reasons, they find sweetness in death: *la gentilezza del morir.*

¹ xii. 25. These words are still in harmony with the spirit of the Church, and are frequently repeated. I heard them recently in a sermon.

² The singular analogies which exist between the doctrine of Plotinus and the Buddhist *Nirrâna* have frequently been pointed out,—fortuitous analogies, which do not result from imitation, but from the same condition of minds.

³ Not to speak of René, Werther, and Manfred, who have brought into fashion a morbid sadness which their originators, Chateaubriand, Goethe, and Byron, did not share. A strange sect among the Russians, the Skoptzi, seem to owe their existence to a similar spirit.

III.—THE CHRISTIAN DOGMAS.

HOWEVER, thoughts like these do violence to human nature; and though the Roman Empire extended to those countries where exertion and the struggle for existence readily become a source of suffering, the doctrine of rest in God would have had, among the more virile populations of the West, only a transient duration, if the beliefs which had produced it had not been, so to speak, incarnated in the most strongly constituted sacerdotal body which ever existed. With a marvellous instinct for the government of souls, and by means of a labor of organization which has never ceased, the Church made definite and permanent that faith which, without her, would have been dispersed and lost, like precious perfume evaporating in an open vase.

With the Platonic theory of the *Logos*, or of the Holy Spirit sent by Jesus to his disciples, the revelation could continue after the disappearance of the revealer. In proportion then as life became more active in the Church, she prepared, according to the times, new organs for new functions, to ward off a peril or respond to a demand. This is the condition of every great and powerful existence. The primitive Church, that of the apostolic age, had become transformed. All that had been free and spontaneous, or vague and fluctuating,—doctrine, hierarchy, or discipline,—was precisely formulated and set in order for a mighty endeavor.¹ The Roman Catholics refuse to recognise this progressive Revolution, and the Protestants condemn it; yet it is by this that the Church has endured. What are the longest dynasties of kings and emperors by the side of the succession of her pontiffs, and

¹ Vol. VI. p. 406 *et seq.*; St. John xiv. 16, 26, and xvi. 13. See in 1 Cor. xiv. 26, what liberty Saint Paul allowed to "those who had received the gift of teaching or of revealing the secret things of God." The ordinances of the Church of Alexandria (Bunsen, *Christianity and Mankind*, vol. vi.) yet say (ii. 41): ἐχωμεν πάρτες τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ Θεοῦ. The propagation of the faith was "by the living word." J. Donaldson (*The Apostolical Fathers*, vol. i. p. 60, 1874), commenting on the words of Irenaeus, well says: "In fact, there was a spoken Christianity as well as a written Christianity; the former existed before the latter." And he attempts to demonstrate what were the faith and the free constitution of the Church at this time when free speech was not fettered by the written formula, and when each body of Christians was independent under its *elders* and *inspectors*.

what institution has lived eighteen centuries? It is not generally recognized that of all the miracles this is the greatest,—human wisdom rearing a temple in which the noblest minds have lived so long, and which shelters so many still.

In the first and second centuries evangelical liberty was very great, and it was only gradually lost.¹ Most of the apologists of the epoch of the Antonines did not even belong to the clergy, and Eusebius² shows that for a long time there were volunteers for the faith, who spread abroad the glad tidings according to their own inspiration. From this resulted diversities, which at an early date produced what the constituted Church called “heresies.”

The Apostles and the Apostolic Fathers had taught, with some discrepancies which we cannot now define, the fundamental doctrine of the divinity of Christ, and, consequently, a revealed law. This law was recorded in numerous accounts of the life of Jesus, which had at first only a traditional value.³ To the early Fathers, the Holy Scriptures were above all the Pentateuch and the Prophets; even in the middle of the second century, Papias, bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia, said that it was far less important to consult the books than living tradition.⁴ But before the end of this

¹ Letter 72 of Saint Cyprian to Saint Stephen, bishop of Rome, closes with these words: *Quia in re nec nos rim cuiquam facimus aut legem damus, quando habeat in Ecclesia administratione voluntatis suae arbitrium liberum unusquisque praepositus, rationem actus sui Domino redditurus.*

² *Hist. eccl.* iii. 37. What is termed the Council of Jerusalem (*Acts xv.*) had itself, on some important points, respected the liberty of the faithful.

³ Donaldson, *The Apost.*, etc., pp. 68, 107, 155, 234, etc. Origen attests (*In Matth.* xii. 6) that some Christians did not find the divinity of Christ clearly expressed in the Gospel of Saint Matthew; and Photius, in his *Bibliotheca*, Cod. 126, addresses the same reproach to Saint Clement of Rome for his Epistle to the Corinthians, in which Jesus is nowhere called God, but the beloved child of God, the high priest, the head of souls. The pseudo-Hermas speaks in the same manner. See also the words of Saint Peter (i. 1, 2, 25), which are not contradicted by the Acts (ii. 36). Cf. Clemens Romanus, *Epist.*, ed. Hilgenfeld, 1876, after the manuscript discovered the year before at Constantinople. Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* iii. 34) gives the date of Clement's death as A. D. 101. The idea of a Messiah was exceedingly Jewish: that of a God become man was not so; and it is quite natural that in the early times it should have entered with great difficulty into the minds of the Jews converted to the Gospel. This was the case, for instance, with Cerinthus, the famous heresiarch, whom certain accounts place in communication with Saint John. Saint Ignatius, dying under Trajan, had combated the Ebionites, who denied the divinity of Jesus (*Ep. ad Magn.* 7-8; *ad Philad.* 6-9), and the Docetae, who rejected his humanity (*Ep. ad Smyrn.* 1-5; *ad Trall.* 6-10).

⁴ . . . τὰ παρὰ ζώσης φωνῆς καὶ μενούσης (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* iii. 39). Irenaeus (iii. 2) also said: *Non per litteras traditam veritatem, sed per virum vocem.* According to Eusebius (*ibid.*), Papias could only have known and employed the Gospels of Saint Mark and of Saint

century the choice between all these accounts was made, and apostolic authority recognized in the three Synoptics, into which older writings had been fused,¹ and in the Gospel of Saint John, although this had been composed later, and differed from the three others on an essential point,—the doctrine of the Logos. This doctrine, which the Alexandrian Jew Philo had brilliantly enunciated, was related both to some ancient Egyptian beliefs, and at the same time to certain ideas of Plato. By giving rise in philosophic minds to the boldest speculations, it was destined to serve as a foundation for the Christian theology which made of the Messiah the Incarnate Word, while the Synoptics supplied to the ordinary preaching, to attract the multitude, their tender and charming parables, and the sombre and sublime narrative of the Passion. The Acts and the Epistles had likewise been admitted, so that the canon of the Scriptures was nearly determined, though no authority had as yet closed or promulgated it.² The Church, therefore, had

Matthew, of which he speaks with great liberty, the Apocaylypse, the first Epistle of Saint Peter, and the first of Saint John. A very important work for the knowledge of the canon of the Scriptures towards the end of the second century is the *Fragment* of Muratori (so called), discovered in 1840 at Milan. [The best general guide is now G. Salmon's *Critical Introduction to the N. T.* London : J. Murray, 1885.—ED.]

¹ Saint Luke, in proem., says, πολλοὶ ἐπεχειροῦσαν.

² I do not need to investigate when and how the canonical books were prepared; a multitude of learned works furnish information on this subject. My duty is to show what were the spirit and the organization of the Church at the epoch when its power was sufficiently great to exert an influence on Roman society and the destinies of the Empire. Now, this epoch corresponds to the reign of Severus. Under Marcus Aurelius, Celsus (Origen, *Contra Cel.* ii. 27) represented the Christians as at that time continually occupied in correcting and altering their Gospels, . . . *mutant pervertuntque*; and Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* iv. 23, and v. 28) confirms this testimony. Origen, who died in 253, in fact says (*Hom. 1, in Luc.*): *Multi conati sunt scribere Evangelica*: but he adds, *sed non omnes recepti*. There was, then, in the first and second centuries, a great work of editing, co-ordinating, and eliminating, which resulted in an evangelical canon. At the time of Tertullian (beginning of the third century) the canon was fixed; for he speaks (*Ad Marcionem*, iv. 2) of the four Gospels “of the apostles Matthew and John” and the “apostolic men” Luke and Mark, as forming the “evangelical instrument” accepted in his time. So also Saint Irenaeus, who was put to death under Severus (*Adu. haer.* iii. 11), and Clement of Alexandria, who died under Caracalla or Elagabalus (*Strom.* iii. 13); but both quote freely from the Apocrypha; Origen thinks “it may be used with discretion” (*Hom. 26 in Matth.* 23). The author of the *Letters* of Saint Ignatius regards the Gospel of the Hebrews as an authentic text (*Ad Smyrn.* 3); Saint Irenaeus mentions also the Acts, the Epistles, and the Apocaylypse. Saint Justin, half a century earlier, never cites the Epistles, and very rarely the Fourth Gospel, the authenticity of which was still under discussion. Even in the middle of the third century, Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, does not know who is the author of the Apocaylypse, and is not without some distrust of the value of this book (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* vii. 25). “Peter,” says Origen (*ap. Eusebius, ibid.* vi. 25), “has left but one epistle which is generally received. . . . John has also left one very short”

its holy book, the New Testament,—less poetical than the Old, but far superior as a winner of souls.

Finally, Theophilus of Antioch had just found a word which is not in the Gospels, the word Trinity,¹—a brief and clear expression of the dogma which the Council of Nicaea stated exactly, by determining the relations of the three divine persons;² and Saint Irenaeus wrote, between the years 177 and 192, the

NATIVITY OF CHRIST.³

Catholic profession of faith in almost the same terms used in the doctrinal formulary of 325.⁴ But all Christian believers did not attach the same importance to these obscure dogmas. In the fourth century, Lactantius, one of the most valiant defenders of the Church, understood them so imperfectly that Pope Gelasius placed his works among the apocrypha; later still, Gregory Nazianzen will show what uncertainty existed with regard to the Holy Spirit.⁵

Thus, at the epoch where we take up the history of the Church, the close of the second century, Christian theology had

Epistle. . . . As to the Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews, my belief is that God alone knows who is its author.” The authenticity of the Pauline Epistles to Titus and Timothy is also much contested.

¹ *Trias* (*Ad Autolyc.* ii. 15), which Tertullian translated by the Latin word *Trinitas* (*De Pudicitia*, 21).

² In respect to this old trinitarian belief, which underlies the Gospels, particularly that of Saint John, see Vol. VI. p. 585, note. Theophilus was bishop of Antioch, and died in the reign of Commodus.

³ From a marble in the Museum of the Lateran (Roller, *Les Catac. de Rome*, pl. lxvii. No. 2).

⁴ *Adv. haer.* i. 10; likewise Tertullian in the *De Praescr.* 13, and, less at length, in the *De Velandis Virg.*

⁵ Gregory Nazianzen, *Orat.* xxxi. *Spiritus sancti negat substantiam*, says Saint Jerome (*Epist.* 49), with reference to Lactantius; and he adds that Lactantius displays more skill in combating error than in establishing truth (*Epist.* 13, *ad Paulin.*).

made a brilliant beginning. It was Greek genius which had done this, by the mouth of Ignatius and Irenaeus, of Justin and Athenagoras, of Tatian and Theophilus, of Melito of Sardis and Apollinaris of Hierapolis; and other Greeks, Clement and Origen, will develop it in the third, in the great school of Alexandria.¹

The fraternal agape had at first been only a remembrance of the Last Supper and a transformation of the great feast of the Jews, the Passover, at which the paschal lamb was eaten in commemoration of the miraculous exodus of the Hebrews when they

THE AGAPE.²

escaped from the bondage of Egypt. The increasing number of believers changed its character; it became the mystic repast, which derived its name, *εὐχαριστία*, from the thanksgiving pronounced in the benediction of the cup and the breaking of the bread.³ For the bloody sacrifice of the old cult, Christianity substituted one of a nature wholly spiritual, like itself, and also celebrating a deliverance,—that of souls.

Sacrifice—that is to say, the gift offered to the gods with the view of gaining their favor—had been the basis of all the cults; and the costlier the offering, the more efficacious was believed to be the sacrifice. Hence the immolation of human victims. Time made this cruel piety unpopular, the philosophers condemned it, and the Emperors prohibited it; but the belief in the merits of sacrifice

¹ Τὸ κατ' Ἀλεξάνδρειαν διδασκαλεῖον (Eusebius, *ibid.* v. 10).

² From a bas-relief of the Kircher Museum (Roller, pl. liv. fig. 7).

³ On the *eucharistia* in the middle of the second century, see Saint Irenaeus (*Adv. haer.* iv. 18) and Saint Justin (*Apol.* i. 65–67).

did not cease: it became transformed and purified. The pagan god received the offering and shared it with his worshippers;¹ the new God gave himself to his priests and his followers. No more shedding of blood, no more flame consuming the victim, no more smoke veiling the divine face. The gifts of the heavenly Father which sustain life upon the earth,—bread, water, and wine,—became symbols of men's communion with him. His spirit was incarnate in Jesus; Jesus ascended to heaven, became incarnate in the bread and wine consecrated on earth: *hoc est corpus meum, hic est sanguis meus.* This was at first only a figure.² As men participated in idolatry by eating the flesh of pagan victims, they participated in the new cult by breaking the bread and drinking the cup. But the condition of men's minds being what it was, the figure must very soon become to the faithful a reality. In the middle of the second century the eucharist was already “the sacrament of the altar.”³ While Christian believers were still far from believing in transubstantiation, they already admitted consubstantiation; and the mystic sanctity which the Lord's Supper had acquired, communicated to the priest who offered the sacrifice a more exalted dignity, with the character of a necessary mediator between heaven and earth.

This character was also to come to him in another way.

Jesus had left to his Apostles only the two commands: “Preach the Gospel to all the nations, and baptize them.” This baptism, which he himself had chosen to receive, was a symbol of purification and the condition of salvation.⁴ In early times it presupposed on the part of the one who presented himself for it a personal adherence given after receiving instruction, and signified by a profession of the Christian faith. Hence it was administered to adults only: the catechumens of Alexandria waited three years for it.⁵ But the sacramental idea attached especial virtues to it; by it, he who was baptized was born again in the spirit. “Plunged in the darkness of a dense night, and floating on the

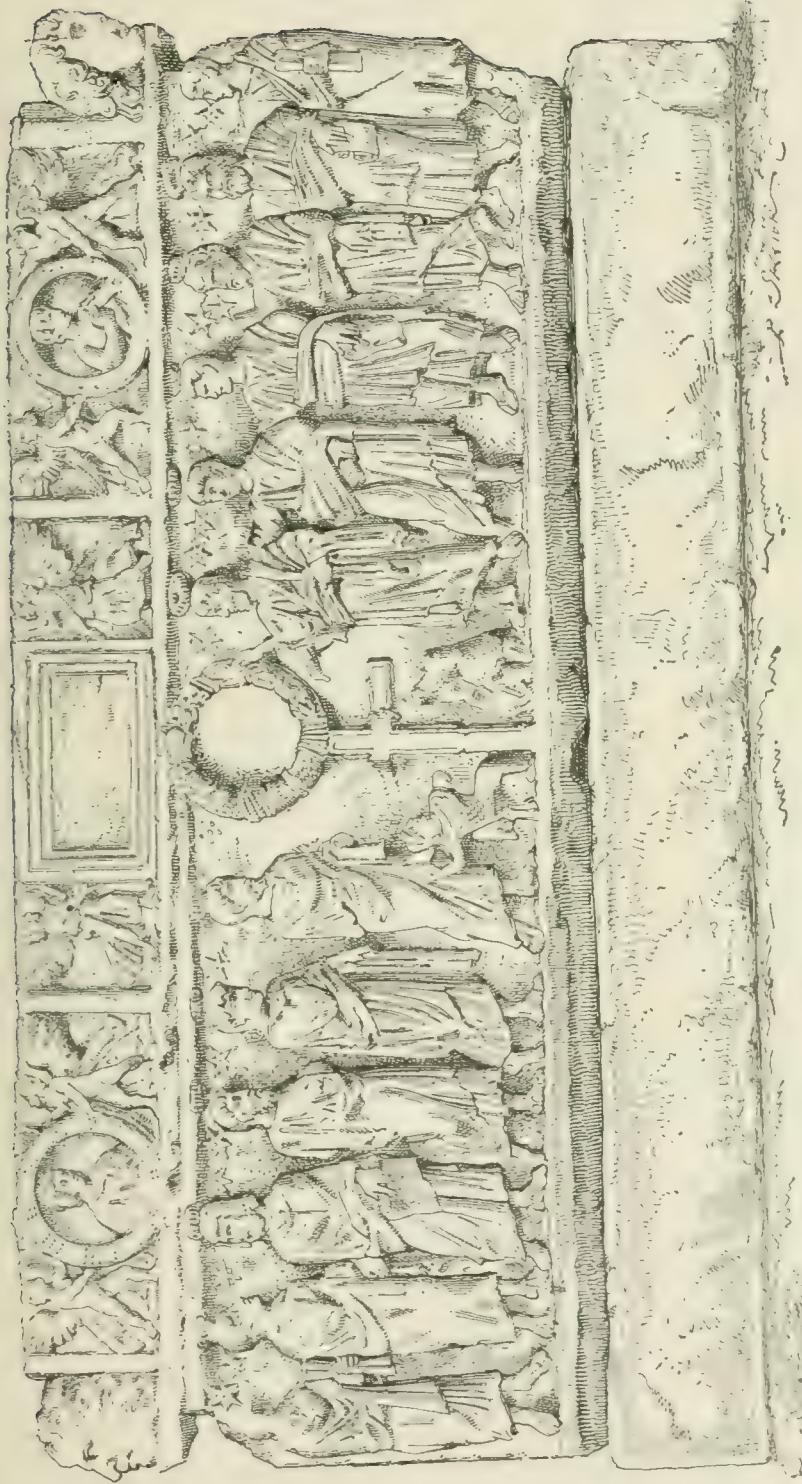
¹ In ancient Italy the repast was always preceded by libations to the Penates.

² The Acts of the Apostles (ii. 42, and xx. 7) explain the words of Paul, 1 Cor. x. 16.

³ Ignatius, *Ad Rom.* 7; *Ad Smyrn.* 7; Justin, *Apol.* i. 66; and Irenaeus, *op. cit.* iv. 18, and v. 2.

⁴ John, iii. 5.

⁵ Κανόνες τῆς ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ ἐκκλησίας (ii. 45, *ap.* Bunsen, iv. 451 *et seq.*).



THE APOSTLES. (BAS-RELIEF OF A SARCOPHAGUS OF ARLES. E. LE BLANT, ÉTUDES SUR LES SARCOPHAGES DE LA VILLE D'ARLES, PLATE XIV.)

stormy sea of the time, I drifted hither and thither," says Saint Cyprian, "and knew not how to direct my life. Divine goodness caused me to be born again in the saving water of baptism. . . . At once a serene and pure light was shed from on high upon my soul, and I became a new man."¹ This efficacy of baptism dispensing with personal adherence, children were admitted to regeneration. This was a noteworthy innovation. The Master had said, *Sinite venire ad me parvulos*; the Church called them and took them. She now watched over the beginnings of life, as over the approach of death, and thus she was enabled to keep or to recover in the turbulent years of youth those whom from their birth she had "enrolled in the army of Christ (*census Dei*)."³

Emerging from the baptismal font, the neophyte was clothed with a white robe,—symbol of innocence,—and he drank, from a vessel of milk and honey, the pure, sweet nourishment of the body, which was an image of the spiritual food distributed by the Church to all her children.⁴

Jesus had said, "Whosoever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them." This was a powerful means of action for the

¹ Saint Cyprian, *Ep. ad Donat.* Saint Justin (*Apol.* i. 61) had spoken of this new birth by baptism, and Origen called it "the principle and the source of the gifts of grace" (*In Joann.* 17).

² From a painting in the crypt of Pope Calixtus (Roller, *op. cit.* pl. xxiv. fig. 4. Cf. *ibid.* i. 131).

³ Tertullian, *De Baptismo*, 17. Baptism was habitually administered by immersion for those in health, by sprinkling for the sick. This rite was also the foundation of the worship of Mithra, then widely extended, and it "regenerated for eternity" him who received it; but it was a baptism of blood, giving rise to a hideous ceremony (Vol. VI. p. 390), which must have repelled women, children, and all sensitive persons. Another baptism of blood, that of the Jews, continued for some time to be practised by the Christian Jews also. The fifteen bishops of Jerusalem, down to the destruction of the temple, were circumcised (Eusebius. *Hist. eccl.* iv. 5).

⁴ . . . *Mellis et lactis societatem* (Tertullian, *Adv. Marcion.* i. 14).



BAPTISM.²

government of souls, promised to the new priesthood. At first, the penitent "made unto the Lord"¹ the avowal of his fault in the presence of the believers, and the priest determined the necessary expiation. But it was inevitable that auricular confession should take the place of public confession. The penitent and the priest were equally interested in this change, for the public confession being possible only in the case of grave offences, the minor ones escaped the action of the Church. With confession to the priest alone, the sinner, especially women,² avoided the shame of humiliation before all the people; and the priest penetrated into the private life of the penitent, and was thus better enabled to direct him for salvation. If the penitent, in a dying condition, desired to be reconciled to the Church, the priest, at his bedside, necessarily represented the whole assembly of the brethren; and the exception ended by becoming the rule. However, public confession was not interdicted until the middle of the fifth century; but at that time auricular confession, whose beginnings we see in the epoch now under consideration,³ had long since acquired the power of a sacrament. By the counsels which follow confession, the priest assumed the direction of the life of the penitents: he taught them the laws of right conduct according to the Church, and by his power to bind and to loose, made saints destined to sit down at the right hand of God, or damned souls whom Satan and his tortures await. The pagan mysteries, too, granted salvation, but by an initiation which was not repeated. In the bosom of the Church the initiation is perpetually renewed by the eucharistic communion, which restores to a state of purity, by the religious teaching which prepares for it, by the sacrament of penitence which brings back the sinner or turns away forever the excommunicated, banished at the same time from the Church and from heaven. What a moral power in this

¹ . . . *Exomologesis est qua delictum domino nostro confitemur* (Tertullian, *De Poenit.* 9). It is the public confession mentioned in the Gospel of Saint Matthew (iii. 6), of Saint Mark (i. 5), and in the Acts (xix. 18).

² Saint Irenaeus (*Adv. haer.* i. 3) speaks of women who publicly confessed their faults.

³ Origen, in the second homily upon Psalm xxxvii. 19, in the *Homilia 2 in Levit.* 4, and in his *De Oratione.* 28, is already more explicit. At this moment, the middle of the third century, the two modes of confession co-exist, but the confession to the priest is already more customary than the confession to the assembly. Cf. the *Octavius,* 9, 10, 11, 12, 25, 26, and 29, and the *De Lapsis.* As to the laying on of hands, that was a Jewish custom.

faith! What supremacy given to these outcasts of earth who were able to give heaven or refuse it! Never before had such authority been recognized by men, such discipline accepted by believers; and how clearly this explains why the nations so long bent their knees and subjected their souls to the priesthood of the Church!

Another sacrament now came into existence, or rather an ancient usage continued under a new form,—extreme unction.¹ This again



THE AGAPE, SYMBOL OF THE EUCHARISTIC COMMUNION.²

is only the prayer of the priests over the sick, the Jewish usage of anointing with oil in the name of the Lord, and the confession of faith by dying persons.³

The civil law does not favor celibacy, for celibacy renders a man free from the obligations of the family, and the family is the basis of society. But in the East, and even in Greece, certain churches and philosophic sects recommended it. In the days of the old religion, some of the goddesses—Diana, Minerva, Vesta, and the Muses—had repudiated even chaste love; and at Athens and Rome, and among the Gauls, the holiest prayers were those

¹ Origen, *Homilia 2 in Levit. 2.*

² After a marble of the Lateran. The Genius which occupies the left is foreign to the eucharistic supper. He supports the frame of the epitaph (Roller, *op. cit.* pl. liv. fig. 6).

³ James v. 14-15. Among the Jews perfumed olive-oil served for various religious uses (Genesis xxviii. 18, and Exodus xxx. 24-29) and for the anointing of high-priests and kings, for the treatment of diseases and wounds (Isaiah i. 6), for the purification of lepers (Levit. xiv. 17).

of virgins. The Apostles and the early Fathers did not impose celibacy; there was, however, a tendency towards it; it was the

THE VIRGIN ¹

natural consequence of a doctrine which prescribed the mortification of the flesh, and renunciation.² As early as the period of

¹ From a fresco of the subterranean basilica of St. Clement at Rome. This Virgin, doubtless of the eighth century, is the oldest known after that of the catacombs of St. Priscilla. The basilica of St. Clement, between the Caelian and the Esquiline, was filled up in the twelfth century for the construction of the present church, and has been rendered accessible only since 1855. The Madonna buried there has consequently suffered no retouching; and with her nimbus of gold and her rich drapery overloaded with gems, offers us an authentic specimen of the Byzantine style (Roller, *op. cit.* vol. ii. pl. C, and p. 354).

² We find in the early centuries numbers of bishops married, but living in celibacy. Caecilius, a presbyter of the church of Carthage, at his death commended his wife and children to Saint Cyprian's care (Fleury, *Hist. eccl's.* ii. 173), and during the persecution of Decius, the Bishop of Nicopolis in Egypt fled to the desert "with his wife" (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl's.* vi. 12). Records of martyrs relating to the persecution of Diocletian speak of married bishops, and a law of 357 (*Cod. Theod.* xvi. 2, 14), confirming the benefits granted by Constantine to the clergy, extended them to their wives and children, *mares et feminae*. The Church recommended continence to the married clergy (Council of Elvira, 33d canon; Council of Nicaea, 3d canon). See in Sozrates (*Hist. eccl's.* i. 11) the speech of Saint Paphnutius in opposition at the Council of Nicaea. The same writer mentions (v. 22) at the end of the fourth century married bishops who had had legitimate children after their ordination.

which we speak, the Christian Church refused to admit to the episcopate those who had contracted a second marriage; and this regulation has been preserved in the Greek Church. In order to control man at every moment of his life, from the cradle to the grave, the Church later made a sacrament of marriage, although without being able to deprive it of its fundamental character of a civil contract.¹

The Virgin, who occupies so high a place in the Roman Catholic Church of modern times, was comparatively an insignificant figure in the early ages. Mention is made of her with respect, but no worship is rendered to her. With the lapse of time the historic person became a sacred type. This was not, however, until the second Oecumenical Council, that of 381, which placed her name in the creed, to which the Fathers of Nicaea had not admitted it.

The dogma of the communion and intercession of saints will also not be formulated until the fourth century. "At the altar," Saint Augustine says, "we do not speak of the martyrs as we do of the faithful who rest in peace. We do not pray for them: we entreat them to pray for us."² As early as the third century, however, there is a trace of this,³ and it was also a necessary consequence.

Thus was formed the grand epic of the Christian religion, as the song of some old klept became, by the labor of successive generations, the *Iliad* of Homer; and it was destined to be, for a long succession of centuries, the consolation and the delight of souls. But the new poet who developed the primitive germ was the Church, or rather those ardent communities, those nocturnal

¹ Jesus had said (Matt. xxiii. 30): "In the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage," and Saint Paul accepted mixed unions (1 Cor. vii. 12-26), — a doctrine which a council again sanctioned in 314. Saint Paul (Ephes. v. 32) calls marriage *μυστήριον*, — a word which has been too freely translated "sacrament." Among the Romans marriage was a civil contract, indispensable for the constitution of the family and the reciprocal rights of the parties and of their children, and the Church could not herself change its conditions; but she joined to it her prayers and her benediction. The Council of Trent (sess. xxiv.) recognized that in marriage the sacrament had the effect of sanctifying the pre-existing contract: *gratiam quae naturalem illum amorem perficeret . . . conjugosque sanctificaret*.

² *Commemoramus . . . ut etiam pro eis oremus, sed magis ut et ipsi pro nobis* (*Tract. 84 in Evang. S. Joann.*).

³ Saint Cyprian, *Ep. 57, ad finem*. The doctrine of purgatory, unknown to the Evangelists (St. Luke xvi. 26), was also propounded by Saint Augustine.

assemblies, whose religious wants increased with the contagion of faith. The ignorant led on the learned; and they, drawing freely from the triple treasure of Biblical poetry, Grecian philosophy, and the Gospel, multiplied the dogmas, made the forms of worship more splendid, and changed all, thinking that they had changed nothing.

The ceremonies varied, for the liturgy, or rule of public worship, had not its present unity, each church being at liberty to prepare its own.¹ Saint Clement, in the century preceding, spoke of this in his *Epistle to the Corinthians*. This bishop of the mistress city of the world, this *Romanus*, as he is called, had also previously invoked discipline by comparing the Church to the legions of Caesar, in which the chief commands.² His successors finally introduced into the Church the same rules of absolute obedience; and the fruitful liberty of the religious life of the early ages, without which nothing could be founded, was destined to disappear, giving place to that discipline without which nothing endures.

At the end of the second century the dogmatic work of the Church was so far advanced that Clement of Alexandria, writing in the reign of Severus, sought to co-ordinate its parts into a scientific system constructed with the ordinary processes of human thought. "Faith," he said, "is the science of divine things given by revelation; but this science must furnish the demonstration of the things of faith." And he composed the *Stromata*, which, though not written with the severe method of Saint Thomas, are nevertheless a first essay of Christian philosophy. Now, it is a sign of power, and often of approaching victory for ideas, when philosophy takes them up and formulates them.

¹ See in the third volume of the *Analecta Ante-Nicaeana* of Bunsen, the fragments of the most ancient liturgies. The first which he quotes (p. 21) was used at Alexandria in the time of Origen; and Bunsen does not think that it can be dated earlier than the middle of the second century.

² Κατανοήσωμεν τοὺς στρατευομένους τοῖς ἡγουμένοις ἡμῶν εἰπάκτως πὼ εἰκοντας (Saint Clement, *Ad Corinth.* 37).

I.—THE HIERARCHY AND DISCIPLINE.

WHILE the Church was thus regulating its internal life, it had been led, by the very nature of its efforts to propagate the faith, to adopt for its external life an organization which the strongest political conceptions have never equalled.

The Christian communities of the earliest days had as few ecclesiastical laws as they had sacraments; each organizing itself after its own will. In the time of Saint Paul numbers of brethren were allowed to assume an office or a title, in order to retain them, by the gratification of a very human sentiment,—the wish to have a certain recognized superiority. We know how fond the fraternities, the cities, and the whole Roman world were of this hierachal order.¹ "God," says Saint Paul, "hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues."² This strange confusion could not last. The Greek cities had *ἐπίσκοποι*, or overseers,—a kind of aediles, whose duties the *Digest*³ defines: "those who have charge of the provisions." The first Christian communities seem to have borrowed this municipal function and its name.⁴ At their head, to preside



THE APOSTLES SAINT PETER AND SAINT PAUL.⁴

¹ See Vol. V. chap. lxxx. "The City." ² 1 Cor. xii. 28. ³ I. 4, 18, sec. 7.

⁴ From a gilded glass of the catacombs, fourth century (Roller, pl. lxxix. No. 5).

⁵ This is the opinion of several theologians, and it is probably correct. Cf. Waddington, *Inscr. de Syrie*, p. 474. We even find *ἐπίσκοποι* in the Greek fraternities (see Wescher, *Revue archéol.*, April, 1866). The episcopal cross is similar to the *lituus* of the Roman augur. Has it been borrowed from it, or does it come from the shepherd's crook? From both, doubtless, but rather from the latter.

over their meetings, they placed the one most venerable by age or sanctity, the elder, the *πρεσβύτερος*. Gradually the overseer, who had the principal active duties, rose above the elder, who possessed only the dignity; or rather the two functions were united, in some places from the very first, and elsewhere later. Saint Paul had overseers or elders, and deacons elected in all the churches which he instituted. At the end of the first century Saint Clement,¹ in the middle of the second, Saint Polycarp² and Saint Justin,³ as yet knew only these two orders; but the number of the believers increasing, that of the ministers of the religion augmented, and differences became marked. On the other hand, to the heresies which were multiplying it was necessary to oppose discipline; that is to say, a concentration of authority. In the time of Severus, the important Christian fraternities had a bishop representing the unity of spiritual government, priests for the religious offices, deacons for the service of the temple,—altogether forming the clergy or “the side of the Lord.”

These offices were elective. The elders chose the *episcopus*, and presented him to the brethren, who then confirmed him in his office by acclamation. They also confirmed, by the raising of hands, the appointment of priests and deacons made by the bishop. Thus we see that, though the consent of the community was necessary, the real choice depended on the chief persons. In this way order, indispensable to regular life, replaced the disorder of the early times. The same necessities which had educed from the multitude of evangelical writings the canon of the Scriptures,—that is to say, the rule of faith,—had insensibly led to the establishment in each Christian community of the hierarchy,—that is to say, the administration,—as later they led to the formation of the general government of the Church. It was in the logic of facts, and we cannot see how it could have been otherwise. Without this discipline there would have been no Catholic Church.

¹ Acts xx. 17–28; 1 Tim. iii. 2–8; Titus, i. 5–7; Saint Clement, *Ad Cor.* 42; Polycarp, *Ad Philipp.* 5; Saint Jerome, *Comment. in Titum*: *Idem est presbyter qui et episcopus . . .*

² *Ad Cor.* 42.

³ *Ep. ad Philipp.* 5, 6. In the *Pastor* of Hermas there is also no trace of an episcopate. Mention is indeed found, in the letters of Saint Ignatius, of bishops, priests, and deacons; but the different texts of these documents give rise to too many discussions to admit of producing them as unobjectionable testimony.

As tradition plays an important part in the Church, the old bishops were supposed to transmit it to the new; hence the consecration of the bishop-elect by a bishop of the vicinity, and the gradual formation of ecclesiastical provinces. "The bishop," says the fourth canon of the Council of Nicaea, "should be ordained by three bishops."

One of the oldest rights of Rome, and, we may say, one of the dearest to the Roman people,—the liberty of forming fraternities and societies,—favored the first organization of the churches.¹ By taking the form of burial associations, the Christians were enabled to organize, under the protection of the law, in corporations having the character of a civil person; that is to say, with the right to receive legacies or donations, and the monthly contributions of their members. The Mosaic law had secured to the Levites the tenth of all the products of the earth. Roman usage gave a new force to the Hebrew custom; and as the synagogues of the whole Empire formerly sent their gifts each year to the temple of Jerusalem, the believers made their offering to the church every month. Many—Saint Cyprian, for instance—sold their property and gave the price of it to the bishop. The incumbent of the Roman see received from a single person two hundred thousand sesterces, and the Bishop of Carthage was able to employ half as much money for the ransom of Christian captives carried away by the Moors.²

Each church had, therefore, a revenue which enabled it to aid the poor and the afflicted, to meet the

¹ The right of association was, according to the testimony of Gaius (*Digest.* xlvi. 22, 4) formally recognized by the Twelve Tables. *Colloqis*, it said, *potestatem facit lex* (XII. Tab.) *pactiōnēm quam vēlīt sibi ferre dum ne quid ex publica lōge corrumpan̄t*. (See Vol. VI. pp. 94 et seq.) The Romans had so great a liking for these associations that they formed them even in the camps, in spite of an express inhibition by Severus.

² Tertullian, *De Praeser.* 30; Saint Cyprian, *Ep.* 60. His letter, No. 65, and that of Pope Cornelius *ad Fab.*, show that the *area* of the churches began to have considerable resources. Even at this time some of the bishops misused them. Cf. Saint Cyprian, *De Lapsis*.

³ Martigny, *Dict. des Ant. chrét.*



A BISHOP.³

expenses of public worship and of the repasts in common, the *agapæ*, at which the priests, like the officers of the pagan societies, received for their maintenance a double portion;¹ even to

THE AGAPE.²

acquire land whereon to establish a common cemetery, in which nocturnal assemblies were held.³

The catacombs of Calixtus, in which so many popes were interred, were already in existence at Rome along the Appian Way, and Alexander Severus adjudged to the Christians an estate which

¹ On the *duplicares*, see Vol. VI. p. 102. Saint Paul had recommended this custom (1 Tim. v. 17, 18), and Tertullian (*De Jejun.* 17) recalls it: *Duplex honor binis partibus praesidentibus deputatur*. The confessors were often honored with a sacerdotal gift (Saint Cyprian, *Ep.* 34). The *agape* and the supper, at first united, *κυριακὸν δεῖπνον* (1 Cor. xi. 20), were separated at an early date. At the end of the fourth century Saint Monica still brought to the church bread and wine, after the African custom. Saint Ambrose forbade her doing it.

² From a painting at the close of the third century or beginning of the fourth, in the cemetery of Peter and Marcellinus on the *Via Labicana* (Th. Roller, *op. cit.* pl. liii. fig. 1).

³ Tertullian, *Apol.* 39, 40. In some cases slaves claimed that with these funds they might purchase their freedom. Μή ἐράνωσαν ἀπὸ τοῦ κοινοῦ ἔλευθεροῖ σθαι (Saint Ignatius, *Ad Polyc.* 2). On the Christian cemeteries of Rome, see the fine work of the Chevalier de Rossi, *Roma sotterranea*.



CRYPT OF POPE SAINT CORNELIUS IN THE CATACOMBS OF CALIXTUS: SECOND CENTURY
(ROLLER, LES CATACOMBES DE ROME., PLATE XXX. 1).

the pagans had contested with them. Ecclesiastical property began, therefore, at this time to be constituted, as had been that of the pagan temples, by donations. For the moment, it was still very small; but it was one day to become very large.

At a later period the Church will again employ the convenient mould of the imperial administration, and will be able to fill it.



BASILICA OF S. LORENZO FUORI LE MURA.

The *ciritas* with its vast territory will form the diocese, and the civil will become the religious metropolis: the archbishop will succeed to the flamen who brought to the altar of Rome and Augustus the prayers and votive offerings of the entire province; finally, the basilica will serve as a church, and even to this day we preserve in thousands of places the Roman usage of keeping the women separate from the men.¹

The societies so numerous in the provinces had preserved the

¹ In the upper galleries of the basilicas the men were on one side, the women on the other (Pliny, *Epist. vi. 33*).

Graeco-Roman idea of popular power, which the Empire had abandoned in fact if not in law; in these colleges all measures were put to vote. The Church followed this usage, which was a matter of apostolic tradition.¹ and the popular election was termed the voice of God (*vox Dei*). Alexander Severus was so struck by the advantages of this system that he for a moment thought of establishing it for the imperial administration.² In the civil order, the election ended all,—at least unless the law recognized the right of the Emperor to approve or to reject; in the Church, another act intervened,—the laying-on of hands, which transmitted spiritual powers to the person elected.³ This rite, indispensable in order that the election should have its religious effect, must have from the beginning reduced the vote of the laity to a simple assent given by them to the choice which the elders had made.

Another essential difference was this: the elections in the civil society were annual; those of the Church conferred, by the episcopal consecration, a permanent character and a life-office. Thus this democratic society gave itself an aristocracy which changed its members very slowly. The conservative element was placed above the varying element, and the Church enjoyed the chief advantage of hereditary governments, duration, without experiencing its inconveniences: a great bishop might be succeeded by another still greater. But this aristocracy did not exercise a power without control. As the duumvir was in a certain measure dependent on the curia, the bishop likewise administered with the council of the priests.⁵

¹ When the Apostles founded the first ecclesiastical office, the diaconate, Saint Peter said to those present (Acts vi. 3): "Look ye out therefore, brethren, from among you seven men . . ." See, in vol. viii. of the *Histoire ecclésiastique* of Fleury, the *Discours sur l'histoire des six premiers siècles de l'Église*, secs. v. and vi.

² Συνενδοκησάσης ἐκκλησίας πάσης (Saint Clement, *Ad Cor.* 44). Ψήφῳ τοῦ λαοῦ παντὸς (Saint Gregory Nazianzen, *Orat.* 24). See the election of Fabian at Rome, under Gordian (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* vi. 29), and that of Cyprian at Carthage. Yet at the end of the second century the election was modified and the powers of the bishop were extended. When the priest Novatus appointed a deacon, Saint Cyprian, his bishop, accused him of usurpation (*Ep.* 52). As in the pagan clergy, certain corporeal defects excluded from the priesthood. See in Socrates (*Hist. eccl.* iv. 23) the story of the monk Ammon, who cuts off one ear to escape the episcopate.

³ Lamp., *Alex. Sev.* 49.

⁴ Acts xiv. 23: χειροτονήσατε τε αὐτοῖς κατ' ἐκκλησίαν πρεσβυτερούς, and *ibid.* vi. 6; viii. 17; ix. 17. The imposition of hands was an old Jewish usage.

⁵ . . . *Et antequam dialoli instinctu studia in religione fierent . . . communis presbyterorum consilio ecclesiae gubernabantur. Postquam vero unusquisque eos quos baptizarerat*

and they assisted him in deciding the questions submitted to him by the laity.¹

All associations which are formed outside of public duties and in opposition to them are compelled to constitute themselves judges of their own members. The Christian community, who designated the officers of the churches and received the confession of the penitent, also made saints, without the formalities required for canonization in succeeding centuries. The veneration with which the multitude of believers regarded the tombs where the remains of the Christian heroes reposed, sufficed later to give admission to the register of martyrs.²

Among the primitive churches there was an interchange of counsels, and sometimes "a mutual and salutary admonition."³ Had they gone no farther, there would have been only a multitude of Christian communities, but they never would have made a church, any more than a group of independent republics constitutes a state. With, however, the dogma of a revealed law and of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, transmitted "by the laying on of hands," it was a necessary consequence that the Apostles should be considered as having communicated to their successors "the certain grace of the truth." The latter were accordingly held to be the depositaries of the oral tradition, which made it possible to explain and extend the written tradition; that is to say, to preserve within the Church a principle of development, like those constitutions of our time which declare themselves subject to revision, or those governments in which legislative action is continually modifying the ancient

suos patibat esse, non Christi, in toto orbe decretum est ut unus de presbyteris electus superponatur ceteris, ad quem omnis ecclesiae cura pertinet et schismatum semina tollentur (Saint Jerome, *Ad Tit.* c. 1, p. 694, ed. of 1737, and *Ep.* 85, or 101 in the edition of the Benedictines, vol. iv. p. 803). He there describes the ancient state of the Church at Alexandria: . . . *Alexandria, a Marco evangelista usque ad Heraclem et Dionysium episcopos, presbyteri semper unum ex se electum in excelsiori gradu collectum episcopum nominabant, quomodo si exercitus imperatorem faciat.* These words are confirmed by the patriarch Euthychius, *Ann.* i. 330.

¹ *Constitut. Apost.* ii. 46.

² The absence of this canonization is one of the arguments employed by Pope Benedict XIV. (*Oeuvres*, vi. 119–125) in refusing to Clement of Alexandria the title of saint.

³ These are the words of Saint Clement (*Ad Cor.* 56): 'Η νοιθέτησις ἢν πωνίμεθα εἰς ἀλλήλους καλή ἐστιν. These letters touch upon all kinds of subjects, and were often written in the name of the entire community, without the intervention of an elder or a bishop; as for instance, the beautiful letter of the Christians of Lyons to their brethren in Asia Minor (See Vol. V. p. 501.)

order in accordance with new requirements. What our statesmen call "reason," the Church calls "the Holy Spirit;" it is the same thing, with this difference,—that the one counsels, and the other commands.

All the bishops had at this time equal authority,¹ and they were very numerous, because every community desired to have its own. This equal authority would only have been a cause of division, had not the necessity of concerted action and mutual understanding led to the borrowing of still another institution from the Roman commonwealth. As the representatives of the cities were accustomed to assemble in the capital of the province, so the representatives of the Christian communities met together at the most important see in the region; and these provincial assemblies, of which the Empire had not known how to take advantage,² made the fortune of the Church. When any difficulty arose, the bishops consulted; and after discussion, decided by a majority of the votes what should be believed and what should be done. Was it not written in the Gospel: "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them"? What was this but to say that the decisions of the councils were inspired by the Holy Spirit?³ The priests and deacons who sat with the bishops,⁴ gave to these assemblies a democratic character,—which is a great advantage for those who deliberate upon the interests of a newly formed society.

This institution, destined to play a very important part, appeared towards the close of the second century. The record has been preserved of only two assemblies of this sort before the time

¹ Saint Cyprian, writing to Pope Stephen on the subject of the bishops of Gallia Narbonensis, says: *Copiscopi nostri* (*Ep. 67*); and in his letter No. 72 we read: . . . *Non legem damus, quando habeat in Ecclesiae administratione voluntatis suae arbitrium liberum unusquisque praepositus rationem actus sui Domino redditurus*. See also the words used by Saint Cyprian when inviting the Fathers of the Third Council of Carthage to vote with absolute freedom, since no one of them thinks of being an *episcopus episcorum*, or is inclined to impose his will on his colleagues,—words which certainly were an allusion to the pretensions of Stephen.

² See Vol. IV, pp. 187, *et seq.*, and 372; and Vol. VI, p. 167.

³ See p. 9. Saint Cyprian writes to Pope Cornelius (*Ep. 54*) on the subject of the Council of 252: . . . *Placuit nobis, sancto Spiritu suggeste*. Constantine will call the decisions of the Synod of Arles, *carlesti iudicium*, and will add: *Sacerdotum iudicium ita debet haberi ac si ipse Dominus residens iudicet* (Hardouin, *Collect. concil.* i. 268). Gregory the Great declared the authority of the first four Ecumenical Councils equal to that of the four Gospels.

⁴ Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* vii. 30.

of Severus, and of two others during his reign,—if we do not count those of the year 196, which were held at Rome, in Palestine, in Pontus, at Corinth, in Mesopotamia, and elsewhere.¹ to fix the date of Easter, which determined the time of many Christian festivals and of certain religious obligations. In the following generation Saint Cyprian convoked sixty African bishops to decide upon measures to be taken against the *lapsi*, and eighty-seven to determine the question of the baptism of heretics.² This new and superior jurisdiction diminished the liberty of the individual churches, but was the only means of making a general Church. In the fourth century the Church will advance farther on this road towards unity of faith and discipline, instituting the Oecumenical Councils, which will decide among the provincial councils, as the latter had decided among individual Christian communities.³

Thus the Church had naturally, by the conditions of its historical development, acquired a constitution superior to that of pagan society, and it had found the chief elements of this constitution in the remnant of liberties which the Empire had left in the midst of the towns and provinces. The Church was a representative democracy, having great vitality through the participation of the people in affairs of common interest, and, through its councils, great power of cohesion. The authority of the episcopate, which increased in spite of cases of local resistance,⁴ will soon augment this union.

Certain sees,—those of Alexandria, of Antioch, and of Rome,—enjoyed a special consideration, due to the importance of the cities where they were established, and to the belief that, having been founded by the Apostles, a purer form of tradition had been preserved in them. Eusebius in his *Ecclesiastical History* gives

¹ See *L'Art de vérifier les dates*, and Hefele, *Concilien geschichte*, i. 69 *et seq.* It is doubtless to these synods that Tertullian alludes (*De Jejunis*, 13). I do not, of course, mention what is called the Council of Jerusalem, between the years 50 and 52. The Council of the Province of Asia, which included a great number of bishops, differed on this point from the opinion of Rome, and this division lasted for centuries (Fleury, *Hist. eccl.* i. 518).

² These eighty-seven bishops belonged to proconsular Africa, Numidia, and Mauretania. This council appears to be of the year 256.

³ The term “oecumenical council” signifies an assemblage of the bishops of the whole habitable earth; but for a long while the limits of the organized Church were the frontiers of the Empire.

⁴ This resistance to the absorption of the Church by the bishop was doubtless the real cause of the struggles of Felicissimus against Cyprian, and of Hippolytus against Calixtus.

to them, in the fourth century, a special dignity, which the Council of Nicæa confirmed. Although as yet there had not gone forth from the Roman Church either an illustrious theologian or any of those great words which provoke or terminate fiery disputes,¹ men must naturally have been led to recognize a primacy of honor in the bishop of the capital of the world, in the see, the only one in all the West, which was regarded as of apostolic origin, which was said to have been consecrated by the blood of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, and in which their tombs were to be seen. Saint Ignatius of Antioch, under Trajan, in his letter to the Christians of Rome, makes no allusion to the special power of their bishop. From their prisons the confessors of Lyons write to him, it is true, recommending the union of the churches; but they address the same recommendation to their brethren of Asia,—words of peace, which on the eve of suffering, the martyrs often sent to other Christian assemblies. Towards the end of the second century the inevitable evolution began. The transalpine churches were the first to gather around the apostolic see. Saint Irenæus recognized in it a certain moral superiority,² while at the same time combating the opinion of the Bishop of Rome in the dispute which the latter maintained with the Eastern churches. However, the ecclesiastical history of the first half of the third century—nominally the letters of Firmilianus to Saint Cyprian against Pope Stephen,³ of the Bishop of Carthage to the prelates of Numidia, and those of the bishops who blamed Pope Victor strongly in the affair concerning Easter⁴—proves that no doctrinal pre-eminence had been as yet accorded to the see of Rome. Among the great sees

¹ Saint Clement's *Epistle to the Corinthianis*, and the *Pastor*, ascribed to Hermas, contain nothing dogmatic.

² . . . *Propter potiorem principalitatem* (*Adv. haer.* iii. 3). Saint Cyprian (*Epist.* 55) also calls the see of Rome *Ecclesia principis*. Despite the famous passage, *επι ταις την πιττην οικοδομησω μου την εκκλησιαν*, Saint Peter did not enjoy any special privilege among the Apostles (*Matt.* xvi. 18; *John* xxi. 15-17).

³ Cyprian, *Epist.* 27, 55, 71. Firmilianus was bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia; his vehement letter against Stephen, touching the nullity of baptism administered by heretics or those who have relapsed into error, is found *ap. Cypr. Epist.* No. 75. He was an important personage in the Eastern Church, for we read that Origen sought refuge with him when Bishop Demetrius compelled the African prelate to leave Alexandria.

⁴ *πληκτικώτερον καθαπομένων τοι* Β'κτυρος (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* v. 24, 11). In the affair of the Novatians, where the Pope deposed two Italian bishops, it was as metropolitan that he did this, and after they had been condemned by a synod (*ibid.* vi. 43).

there are gradations, but no subordination. The need of union for defence will at a later period establish a hierarchy; the primacy of honor will be changed into primacy of jurisdiction; and the Pope¹ will have an empire more vast than that of the Emperors. The centre of Christendom could not be elsewhere than at the tomb of Christ or in the capital of the world. The destruction of Jerusalem by Titus and Hadrian made the pontifical fortune of Rome.

Before this supreme achievement of the hierarchy had taken place, unity was established,—thanks to the constant intercourse of the Christian fraternities among themselves. They interchanged the letters of bishops and the canons of councils, the churches who accepted them by that act acknowledging themselves to be “in communion” with those who had sent them. Union appearing to be a necessity, concessions were made on points of secondary importance, to avoid divisions which would have exposed the believers to perils greater than persecution; hence the changes which were carried into effect, imposed by circumstances, were in addition the logical development of the primitive doctrine and discipline. Thus the Catholic Church grew up gradually through the union of the individual churches. About the middle of the third century a man of signal ability, Saint Cyprian, presented the formulary of this union in a treatise on the *Unity of the Church*, in which he asserted that the Christian societies must remain in communion among themselves and with the apostolic see, which is the centre of Christendom.

“The primacy,” he says, “was given to Peter to show that there is but one Church; but the Apostles were what Peter was. The episcopate is one, and all the bishops are pastors; they have but one flock. The Church likewise is one, and it is diffused by

¹ The bishops, even the clergy, bore this title. The name of “pope,” which is synonymous with “father,” was not assigned exclusively to the Bishop of Rome until in later centuries. As regards universal jurisdiction, —or, as ecclesiastical writers now say, “primacy of vigilance and inspection”—the history of the Church in the third century does not warrant the recognition of it in the Bishop of Rome, and a long time will yet pass before it is found. The Emperors Gratian, Valentinian, and Theodosius, having desired to fix by the constitution of 380 (*Cod. Theod.* xvi. 1, 2) the religion of their people (*cunctos populos . . . in tali ratione religione versari*), give them as a rule of faith the doctrines taught by the bishops of Rome and of Alexandria, who are thus placed in the same rank. The constitution of 421 (*Cod. Theod.* xvi. 245) records that if in Illyricum any doubt shall arise concerning the ancient canons, the matter shall be referred to the bishop of the city of Constantinople, *quae veteris Romae praerogativa laetatur*.

its fruitfulness into several persons." The Rome see, then, is in his eyes the sign, and not the rule, of the unity, which was to him the result of the common concurrence of all the members. The needs, and the ideas to which these needs gave rise, did not at that time require a greater concentration of spiritual authority.

Of all these innovations, the most important in its historical consequences was the formation of a class of men not before in existence.—except, perhaps, in the interior of the peninsula of Hindostan. By the celibacy which will hereafter be imposed upon him, the Christian priest will become a new being in creation, as, by spiritual consecration, which neither civil authority nor popular election can give, he becomes a man apart in society. But the renunciation of the conditions of human nature will acquire for him a personal power in addition to the religious power that secured to him the right to remit sins and to bring down God upon the earth in the sacrifice of the altar. These priests will most frequently be good men, of an angelic purity, and with a devotion equal to any sacrifice; but sometimes also they will be men of such pride that they will set their feet on the necks of kings. Hence they will become formidable to civil society, because, being placed outside of it, they constitute a great sacerdotal body, desiring, and by virtue of its doctrines required, to seek by every means to prevail over society.

There was then about to be introduced into the Western world a condition the opposite of what Rome had known and practised for ten centuries; namely, the separation of the clergy and the laity, of the Church and the State. In the Graeco-Roman world the union of the believer with the divinity was directly realized: the father of the family was the priest of its gods. The Christian required an intermediary to enter into communion with the object of his worship. This produces a diminution of the individual dignity of the believer, while the authority of the body exclusively devoted to religious service is greatly increased by it. Attached to the priestly office for life by their faith and by their interests, since they live by the altar,¹ these men consecrated their activity,

¹ A Christian community of Rome, which, in the time of Pope Zephyrinus and the Emperor Severus, wished to have its especial bishop, assured him 150 denarii per month (*Eusebius, Hist. eccl. v. 29*).

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THE APOSTLES : VASE OF THE FOURTH CENTURY, IN THE KIRCHER MUSEUM (ROLLER, PL. LXXIII. 3).



their genius, their holiness, and sometimes their blood, to the aggrandizement of the Church. And as it is in the nature of every corporate body to work unremittingly to extend its influence and its privileges, the establishment of the clergy, such as it has been now described, secured to the Church a formidable army, which at the outset prevented it from perishing, and afterwards rendered it victorious. Never did the most loyal praetorian guard render to its Emperor so great service as the Church has received from the sacerdotal corps. The repository of religious doctrine and of moral truth, it has defended the one according to the time

RESURRECTION OF THE DAUGHTER OF JAIRUS.¹

and the place, with the spirit of gentleness, of sacrifice, or of un pitying hardness: but it has preserved the other in the darkest days of history, and still teaches it.

Thus the Church developed harmoniously its twofold life, doctrinal and disciplinary. One thing alone diminished in it,—the virtue of the miracle. In proportion as it had been extended more widely, it had lost that power which, to be admitted, has need of remoteness in time and space. The faith of the simple had filled with marvellous deeds the history of the early days; Saint Irenaeus still believed “that the genuine disciples of Christ could deliver those possessed, foretell the future, heal the sick,

¹ From a mutilated sarcophagus. Four different scenes follow in succession on this bas-relief. 1st, on the left, Moses striking the rock: 2d, adoration of Christ by four persons, among whom two are weeping and veiling their faces: 3d, the resurrection of the daughter of the chief of the synagogue of Capernaum: 4th, Christ standing with his right hand raised. This last part is incomplete (E. Le Blant, *Étude sur les sarcophages chrétiens antiques de la ville d'Arles*, pl. xvii. and p. 28).

and raise the dead."¹ The doctots of the age of which we are speaking beheld these wonders no longer, while still believing that they might see them; and Origen shows us how enfeebled was the divine gift, daring to speak only of "the vestiges of them which exist among the Christians." After the passage of another half-century we hear the Bishop of Caesarea acknowledge sadly that even these vestiges have disappeared.²

In contrast with the strong organization of the Church should be placed the weakness of the imperial clergy. Heads of Christian communities, the bishops, are judges for heaven, and judges also for earth; for the brethren acquire the habit of submitting to them the differences which arise among themselves. The pagan priests—mere masters of ceremonies in the religious solemnities—had neither vast domains and revenues of their own, as the Church will possess when its turn shall come to combat innovators, nor jurisdiction which gave them subjects, nor public teaching securing them disciples; and paternal authority, by closing to them the interior of the family, kept the women and children out of their influence. The old clergy was therefore incapable of contending with the new. The attack was admirably conducted; the defence was very poor. Shouts of the populace and sentences to death,—that is to say, acts of violence,—were not sufficient to hinder the spread of a religion which, born of the spirit, could have been arrested or restrained only by the spirit.

¹ Tertullian (*De Spect.* 29) recognized also in Christians the power to drive out devils, to perform miraculous cures, and to receive divine revelations. But when the interlocutor of Saint Theophilus of Antioch demands for his conversion that the bishop should show him a dead person raised to life, Theophilus replies to him (*Ad Autolycum*, i. 8): "Do as the laborer who sows before he harvests; as the voyager and the sick who believe, the one in the pilot before arriving in port, the other in the physician before recovering his health." And he is indeed right: belief in miracles requires a special disposition of mind; a man believes in them, not because he sees them, but because he thinks he sees them. This is the very expression of the bishop: "It is necessary to believe in order to see."

² Origen, *Contra Celsum*, i. 2; Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* v. 7.

V.—THE HERESIES.

ARMED with its canonical books and its ardent faith, sustained by its hierarchy, fortified by its discipline, the Church advanced slowly but surely to the conquest of the world. To the anarchy of doctrines it opposed the simplicity of its dogma; to philosophic freedom, the unity of its spirit; and it cast out of its fold those who, in the common *Credo*, sought "to make their selection."¹

The narratives of the Gospels and the doctrinal exhortations of the Epistles had sufficed for the simple men whom the Church recruited in the first century. But when, in the second, the faith reached cultivated minds, these persons desired to co-ordinate their beliefs, and solve by the processes of the schools the questions which they involved. Then was produced, in the solutions of religious problems, the same diversity that we have elsewhere seen in philosophical solutions. Many said, like the Clement of the Christian romance of the *Recognitions*, "I am sick in soul," and sought by the most diverse ways a remedy for these sufferings of the spirit, more agonizing than any bodily pain.

The Christian sects drew their inspiration, it is true, from the same book; but this book admitted of a thousand different interpretations, and the prophecy of Simeon was fulfilled: "Behold, this child is set . . . for a sign which is spoken against."² Even after the Council of Nicaea, Saint John Chrysostom could say: "The mysteries of Scripture are like the pearls which fishermen search for in the depths of the sea. It is difficult to penetrate its meaning, still more difficult for all to comprehend it in the same manner."³ Infinite was, accordingly, the number of solutions proposed, and each solution found ready to accept it some of those men whom Saint James describes as "carried about with every wind of doctrine." There were few great Christian communities whose bishop was not obliged to refuse the kiss of peace to men who presumed to discuss their faith.

The author of the *Philosophumena* enumerates thirty-two

¹ Heretic signifies in Greek, "the one who chooses."

² St. Luke ii. 34: *Ecce positus est . . . in signum cui contradicetur.*

³ *Hom.* xiv., on the second chapter of Genesis.

heresies.¹ "Under the fire of persecution they swarmed," says Tertullian, "like scorpions on the banks of the Nile under the burning rays of the summer sun." We must leave to writers of religious history the study of these subtle discussions and of the rash audacity which has made humanity expend so much time and thought in vainly sounding the unfathomable. It will be sufficient for us to say that two principal categories of these insubordinate believers have been made, passing by insensible shades from almost complete orthodoxy to the absolute denial of a fundamental dogma,—the heresies of interpretation, who changed the meaning or the text of the Scriptures; and the heresies of inspiration, who preached another law. Even in the time of the Apostles, Cerinthius had regarded Jesus as a man; a little later, Ebion—or at least the Ebionites—believed him to have been born of Joseph and Mary, admitting that he had by his virtue merited the descending of the Holy Spirit upon him. These tenacious doctrines, found in the second century in the singular book of the *Recognitiones* and in the *Pastor* of Hermas, had been lately again advanced by Artemon and Theodosius of Byzantium. A bishop of Antioch, Paul of Samosata, shortly after took them up again, and they were destined to culminate in the great heresy of Arius. Now, to deny the divinity of Christ, or, like the Docetae, to reject his humanity, was to undermine the foundation of the new religious edifice; and again, it was shaken if, with Praxeas and Sabellius, the Son was confounded with the Father: but to assume, as Montanus did, the character of prophet, was to change its constitution and expose it to all the tempests raised by frenzied mysticism. If the former prevailed, religion was destroyed, since the great mystery of God made man disappeared; if the latter, there was an end to organization, that is, to the constant acting of force in the same direction, since "the Spirit bloweth where it listeth." —doctrinal unity was at an end, and the universal Church no longer existed.

This latter variety of heresy was especially formidable because among the Christians it was constantly held that the gift of pro-

¹ In the fourth century Saint Epiphanius reckons sixty, and Themistius says that the Greeks have three hundred, different theories as to the Divinity (*Socrates, Historia eccles.* iv. 32).

phecy, while it had become enfeebled, had not ceased in the Church.

It had been said to the Apostles: "I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter. . . . But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, . . . shall teach you all things." The mystics drew authority from these words, and many believed, with Tertullian, that Montanus received the inspiration promised by Jesus. But this belief in special revelations, which destroyed the Gospel revelation while pretending to continue it, has given, and still gives, rise to the most dangerous sects. Marcion, in opposing to each other the Old and the New Testament, had already laid the foundation for Manichaeism.

In the midst of so many doctrines the Church made its choice with the wonderful spirit of order and government which it seems to have inherited from those who persecuted it. Although it had as yet determined only the main outlines of the temple which it was to rear, it had already, in the third century, its immovable Capitoline rock (*Capitolii immobile sacrum*), against which the unceasing waves of heresy beat in vain. Irenaeus had just been writing against the Gnostics; Tertullian was engaged with the Valentinians and the Marcionites, with Hermogenes, who maintained the eternity of matter, with Praxeas, who was attacking the dogma of the Trinity: the Bishop of Antioch had condemned Montanus; the Bishop of Rome, Theodotus of Byzantium, and Minucius were arguing against the pagans.¹ The Church then knew her own will; and her sons, in listening to her, felt that they "rose from the profound night of error into the full light of wisdom and truth."² while others, the philosophers, or "those who made a choice," were wandering at random. Finally, the Christian body already possessed what paganism never had,—a mighty force of discipline. By all these things its victory is explained.

¹ Minucius Felix was a Roman lawyer. In his *Octavius* he essays to imitate Cicero and Plato; but, with the exception of a pleasing preamble, his pretended dialogue is only two successive discourses. In the one he makes accusations against the Christians, in the other he refutes them; and nowhere does he set forth the dogma. It is a plea, sometimes violent, always superficial, but written with a certain elegance of style, and composed for men of letters.

² . . . *Discussa caligine, de tenebrarum profundo in lucem sapientiae et veritatis emergere* (Minucius, *Oct.* 1).

Along with this strength the Church had also its weak points,—in some of its clergy a spirit of pride and insubordination which led to lamentable falls;¹ among the members, vices which are too strongly planted in our nature for faith to be always able to repress them; or the hypocritical profession of sanctity in order to profit by the alms of the brethren; in the days of trial which are to come, numerous apostasies,² explained by the fact that the Church was chiefly recruited from among the lower classes,³ in which were found so many men “lions in peace, timid deer in time of conflict;”⁴ and finally, in the clerical order itself, rivalries and quarrels which led to schism or heresy.⁵ Born on the same day,

¹ Those of Tertullian, Origen, Tatian, etc. Saint Justin and Saint Irenaeus had adopted the doctrine of the Millenarians, and Clement of Alexandria sometimes borders on heresy.

² Origen goes so far as even to say, “Certain churches are changed into dens of thieves” (*In Matth. xvi. 8, 22; xi. 9, 15*). Saint Cyprian accused the priest Novatus of having suffered his father to die of hunger, caused his wife to miscarry by his brutalities, and committed, after his elevation to the priesthood, numerous acts of fraud and rapine (*Ep. 49*),—accusations which may have been false, but which show that the Church of Carthage was as much disturbed as that of Rome. Cf. Tertullian, *Ad Nat. i. 5*. In the *De Jejun.* 17, he also admits that there were many sources of danger in the agapae, the abuses of which Saint Paul had already noticed (*1 Cor. xi. 21-22*), and to which Saint John Chrysostom (*Hom. 27 in 1 Cor. xi.*) and Saint Augustine (*Ep. 64*) refer. See in the 35th canon of the Council of Elvira (about A. D. 300) the measures taken against the disorders of the Christian meetings at night.

³ On the apostasies, see Le Blant, *Mémoire sur la préparation au martyre*, in the *Mém. de l'Acad. des inscr. xxviii. 54, 55*, the *De Lapsis* of Saint Cyprian, and his letter No. 30.

⁴ . . . *De ultima fæce collectis imperitioribus.* It is the pagan of the *Octavius* who speaks thus (sec. 8), and Celsus (i. 27 and iii. 44) had already said: “They know how to win only the silly, vile souls without intelligence, slaves, women, and children.” Further on, in sec. 12, Caeccilius repeats: *Eeci pars vestrum et maior et maior, ut dicitis, cogitis, algatis, opes, res, fame laboratis;* and in his reply (sec. 31) Octavius contents himself with saying: “We are not the dregs of the people because we refuse your honors and your purple.” Then he adds (sec. 36): *Quod plerique pauperes decimur, non est infamia nostra, sed gloria.* The Church indeed gloried, and very justly, in seeking out the little ones; among the martyrs whom it most honored were Blandina and two women, Felicitas and Potamienna, who suffered punishment under Severus, all three of whom were slaves. The first martyr of Africa, Namphonius, or more properly Namphamus (see L. Renier, *Mé. d'hist.* pp. 277 *et seqq.*) and Eusebius, who suffered martyrdom with Saint Justin, were of the same condition. Pope Calixtus (218-222) had been the slave of a freedman (*Philosoph. ix. 12*); and thus it must have been for a long period, for in the higher classes the entirely pagan education was hostile to Christianity, and a profession of the Christian faith rendered it necessary to break with society and its honors. Finally, it was not enough to strip “the old man” of his beliefs, but his pleasures and his wealth must also be taken from him; and many, like the young ruler of the Gospel, went away sorrowful when they were reminded of the precept of Jesus on giving up their goods to the poor. But we have seen that from the middle of the second century the Church also attracted to itself some great minds, Aristeides, Justin, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen, etc.; and the comparative peace which it enjoyed during the first half of the third century gave opportunity for several conversions in great families (Cyprian, *Epist. 80*).

⁵ Tertullian, *De Cor. i.*

⁶ See the Epistle of Saint Clement to the Corinthians, on the “impious and detestable”

Faith and Heresy are two sisters, hostile, and yet inseparable: the one accompanies the other, and will forever accompany her.

There was a third and impure sister, Theurgy, who insinuated herself among Christians of all sects, as among pagans of every cult, and even among the philosophers. Miracles were everywhere demanded, and there was no lack of persons who pretended to perform them. In the condition of minds at that time, nervous diseases must have been frequent, those "possessed" numerous, and healers easy to be found,—self-deceived charlatans, or mere impostors, whose incantations always made dupes, and who bandied about from one sect to another the charge of working by the aid of devils. We have seen in the preceding volume the miracles of the pagans; the *Philosophumena* show that they appeared to continue, but that those of the Gnostics rivalled them. In concluding his account of the practices of these thaumaturgists the author adds: "That is the way to deceive the simple-minded."¹ If that were true, the whole world, pagans and Christians, merited the harsh epithet; for faith in the supernatural existed in all places, and in the Church more than anywhere else. So, without seeking or wishing to do so, she nourished in her bosom "doers of marvellous works;"² and of these inspired persons the larger number were women.

Christianity has always had a special tenderness for women; and this is just, for they have been, and still are, its most potent auxiliaries. Their lively imaginations, their delicate natures—still so virginal even in the wife and mother—were captivated by that belief which enjoined charity and love; which even, by the

sedition which had broken out among them; the letters of Saint Cyprian in respect to Novatus and Felicissima; what the angels in the vision of Satur say to Bishop Optatus (*Lets of Saint Perpetua*); and the circumstances which brought about most of the schisms and heresies. Thus Saint Jerome (*De Vir. Illustr.* 53) affirms that it was the jealousy and ill-conduct (*invidia et contumeliae*) of the clergy of Rome which caused the fall of Tertullian. He shows "Rome convoking its Senate against Origen because the furious dogs who were barking at him could not endure the brilliancy of his speech and his knowledge" (Rufinus, *Apol. adv. Hieron.* ii. 20; cf. Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* vi. 8). By these "furious dogs" Saint Jerome meant the bishops of Egypt, who had cut off the great teacher from their communion. Origen himself applied to them the severe words of Jeremiah (ii. 8) concerning the guides of the people who were so apt in doing evil (Fragment of a letter quoted by Saint Jerome, *adv. Ruf.*). This evil dated far back. Saint Paul had to reprimand the Christians of Corinth and of Crete; Saint James, those who exaggerated the Pauline doctrine; Saint John, the Nicolaitans.

¹ *Philos.* iv. 4, 15: πειθεὶ τοὺς ἄφρονας.

² The signification of the word "thaumaturgist" (*θαιμάτα* and *έρδεω*, from the root *έργη*).

legend of Mary Magdalene, the repentant sinner, granted favor and pardon to those who had loved much.

It was to them that these men appealed who gained admission into houses, "silent before the husband, inexhaustible in talk with the matron."¹ Celsus and the pagan of the *Octavius* indicate what part the women afterwards bore in the propagation of Christianity. The mother, having been won over, brought with her the son, and then the father and the entire household. The story of Saint Monica converting her husband and her son is very old and



BAS-RELIEF OF A CHRISTIAN SARCOPHAGUS.²

ever new. Hence the Church assured them an honored place. The Epistles speak of holy women filling an office in the religious community,—a testimony which Pliny confirms;³ and Lucian shows them carrying into prisons food for Christian captives. Though teaching and performing the rites of public worship were forbidden them, Jesus had given to them the good part. When Martha is indignant at being excluded from the priesthood, Mary replies to her with a smile: "Did he not tell us that our weakness would be saved by his might?"⁴ This divine power which raises them so high is love.

¹ Origen, *Contra Celsum*, iii. 55.

² This sarcophagus represents the following miracles,—Daniel unharmed by the lions; Jesus changing the water into wine; and raising Lazarus. In the centre, a Christian in the attitude of prayer (Marble of the Catacombs of Calixtus). Roller, *op. cit.* pl. xlviij. fig. 2).

³ In the *Pastor* of Hermas there is also mention of deaconesses charged with the relations of the Christian community to the widows and orphans. In respect to the testimony of Pliny, see Vol. V. p. 288.

⁴ ὅτι τὸ διθεῖον εἴα τὸν λαχνόν σωθῆσθαι (Const. i. 21, *ap.* Bunsen, *op. cit.* vol. vi.). Cf. De Pressensé, *La Vie des chrétiens*, p. 77.

But love is a matter of sentiment much more than of reason. In a well-ordered heart it instigates a rational devotion to good works; otherwise, it causes disorder. By their nervous constitution, women are predisposed to excitement: some gave way to it; and these had visions, or prophesied.

In the ecstasy into which they lapsed after long fastings and macerations, they saw heaven opened, and conversed with angels. Tertullian has preserved to us one of these cases of psychological pathology: "One of our sisters," says he, "in the ecstasy which the Spirit bestows upon her in the very midst of our assemblies, has the grace of revelations: she sees and hears holy things, reads what is in the heart, and points out remedies for the sick. Let the Scriptures, a psalm, a homily be read, and immediately she has a vision. One day when I had discoursed upon the soul, she said to us, among other things: 'I have seen a corporeal soul, having a certain form and a consistency such that it might have been grasped; it was shining, of an aerial color, with a human countenance.'"¹ Tertullian must have been extremely delighted with a vision which confirmed his doctrine of the material nature of the soul. He had just been stating it, and the echo of the priest's words, instead of being another word, became a visible object: the visionary *saw* what she had just *heard*: and there is not a day in which this miracle does not occur in certain of our hospitals.²

The more intense the religious life became, the more sects multiplied. From time to time the confusion penetrated into the bosom even of the greatest churches, because the effort to bring everything under discipline, thus enhancing the episcopal authority, clashed with souls at the same time religious and independent. We know by the letters of Saint Cyprian what disorders existed among the Christians of Carthage. All those in revolt are naturally represented as wretches; it is the lot of the vanquished. But if we knew something more than the accusations "against the conspiring priests;" if those to whom the bishop imputes so many shameful deeds had told us the motives of their conduct,—perhaps

¹ *De Anima*, 9.

² Not only philosophers at the present day should study the sciences concerned with life; historians really have more need to understand them, for physiology played an important part in the world before there were physiologists, and it explains many facts inexplicable without it. It is sad to say this; but a hospital for the insane is also itself a book of history.

we should see in the excommunicated, instead of erring and guilty persons, men defending the liberty of their church.

This struggle between two principles, one of which was soon to stifle the other, existed at Rome, unknown even to those who maintained it. A book recently discovered, the *Philosophumena*,¹ written by a bishop, shows irritating discussions in this church.

The slave Calixtus had been ordered by his master to found a bank. He was unfortunate,—the author says, dishonest,—and was sent to the mill; that is, to the hardest labor. The brethren interfered; he recovered his liberty and, one day, outraged the Jews in open synagogue, which caused him to be condemned by the prefect of Rome to be beaten with rods and sent to the mines of Sardinia as a disturber of public order. When Marcia, the concubine of Commodus, obtained from the Bishop of Rome the names of the Christians banished to the island, in order to release them, Bishop Victor did not place Calixtus on the list; but the latter won over the messenger of the Empress, who took it upon himself to bring Calixtus away with the others. On his return to Rome he succeeded in getting into the good graces of Pope Zephyrinus,—“a simple-minded man,” says the author, “very avaricious, and somewhat venal,” who placed him in charge of the common cemetery of the Christians,² and later of the distribution of alms and of the administration of the church. In these duties, which brought him into daily contact with all the faithful, he won their confidence. The Christian community was at this time very much divided; he persuaded each faction that he was at heart with them, and on the death of Zephyrinus he was elected pope, notwithstanding his unfavorable antecedents (A. D. 218 or 219). Immediately disorder and the confusion in belief increased. Calixtus accused several orthodox bishops of heresy, while he himself taught that the Father and the Son were one and the same person. To multiply the number of his adherents, he admitted married men to the priesthood; to the church, sinners unreconciled; to the

¹ This manuscript, discovered in 1840 and published for the first time in 1851 by M. Miller, has been attributed to Origen, to Caius, a Roman priest, to Tertullian, and to Hippolytus, bishop of Portus Romanus, at the mouth of the Tiber. Whoever he is, the author was an adversary of Pope Calixtus,—a fact which renders it necessary, without rejecting his narrative, to make allowance for the passion which he displays in it.

² *Cemeteryum Callisti*, discovered by the Chevalier de Rossi, and so well studied by him.

communion, men of easy morals, women living in concubinage, mothers who had exposed their infants. "Let the tares grow with the wheat," said he; "the Church has for its symbol the ark of Noah, which contained clean and unclean animals."¹ What truth is there in these accusations? We do not know. The author of the *Philosophumena* evidently leans towards the Montanists, and an indulgent bishop is displeasing to his austere mind. But if the picture be overdrawn,—even if, as has been maintained, in



POPE CALIXTUS (FROM A GILT GLASS).²

order to get rid of a humiliating revelation, the Calixtus of the *Philosophumena* is not he of the Church,—it no less remains true that Rome had at this epoch its revolts against the ecclesiastical chief; soon there was made an anti-pope, Novatian. Pope Stephen and the great Bishop of Carthage exchanged angry letters,³ and the Bishop of Caesarea says of his Roman brother: "His soul is deceitful, fickle, and not to be depended on."⁴ At Alexandria, Demetrius, jealous of Origen, will force him to leave that city, and later, excommunicate him from the Church. Later still, Paul

¹ *Philosoph.* ix. 12. The reproaches of the author are evidently exaggerated; but on the question of the troubles at Rome his testimony is confirmed by the *Pastor of Hermas*—*Vos infraeati a secularibus negotiis tradidistis vos in sacerdiam* (*Visio*, iii. 2)—and by what Saint Jerome says of the conduct of the Roman clergy with regard to Tertullian. Amm. Marcellinus relates (xxvii. 3), at an epoch when discipline was far better established, that when two bishops were disputing for the see of Rome, a terrible riot broke out, after which a hundred and thirty-seven dead bodies were found in the Sicilian basilica.

² Roller, *op. cit.* pl. lxxviii. No. 2.

³ Cyprian, *Epist.* 75, 25, and 26: . . . *Non pudet Stephanum, Cyprianum pseudochristum et pseudoapostolum dicere.* The Novatians, a rigid sect which did not admit of reconciliation with the *lapsi*, were still numerous in the fifth century (*Socrates, Hist. eccl.* iv. 28).

⁴ *Id., ibid.* 78, 25: . . . *Anima lubrica, mobilis et incerta.* The bishops of Tarsus and of Alexandria also sided with Cyprian against Stephen in this controversy.

of Samosata will be forced to leave the episcopal throne at Antioch, under accusation of avarice, bad morals, and heresy. The Christian communities, then, were not always the seraphic Church of tradition; they were composed of men, some of whom had great virtues, while others were subject to the same passions and vices with ourselves, and to all those transports of feeling which in certain natures often accompany the religious spirit.

As early as the time of Marcus Aurelius, Celsus had been able

to assert that the divisions were already such among Christians that they no longer had anything in common except the name; and Ammianus Marcellinus, a pagan void of religious passion, who renders homage to the purity of the Christian faith, says in the following century: "Wild beasts are not more furiously enraged against man than are most Christians against one another."¹ Pious souls, on the contrary, have drawn from these persistent disorders proof that the new religion was of divine institution, since a human work could not have survived such



CHRISTIAN LAMP OF BRONZE.²

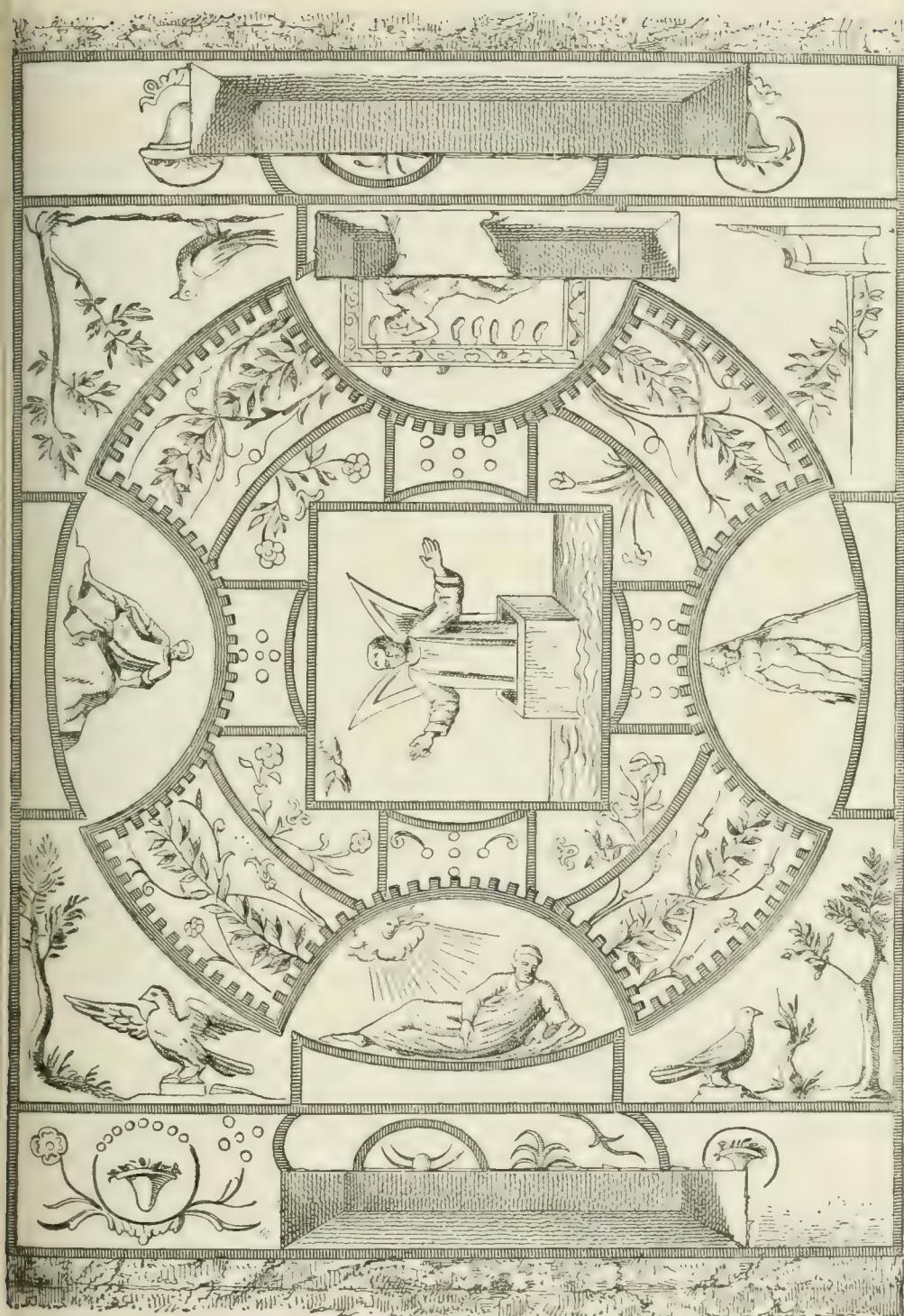
lacerations. We can only say that they were inevitable. Man, with all his passions, exists in the theologian as well as in the philosopher;³ for the violent or the peaceful are not made so by their beliefs or their ideas, but by the character and the habits which education has moulded, and the institutions to which the life has been conformed.

¹ Origen, *Contra Celsum*, iii. 10 and 12, and Amm. Marcellinus, xxii. 5.

² Roller, pl. xc, fig. 12. This lamp (of about the end of the fourth century) bears the cruciform monogram.

³ This is akin to what Saint Paul says to the Corinthians (2 Cor. iii. 1-3), when he places in opposition in the Christian the *spiritual man* and the *carnal man*.

NOAH'S ARK. CENTRE OF A FRESCO; THE CEILING OF A CUBICULUM OF THE CATACOMBS OF DOMITILLA: MIDDLE OF THE THIRD CENTURY (ROLLER, PLATE XXXV, AND BOSIO, PAGE 242).



CHAPTER XCI.

THE PERSECUTION UNDER SEVERUS.

I.—IDEA OF THE STATE AMONG THE ANCIENTS; OPPOSITION OF THE CHRISTIANS.

THE imperial government was well aware of the powerful organization of the Church,¹—these communities corresponding with one another from one end of the Empire to the other; these men who without money traversed land and sea, who everywhere saw, at their approach, doors and hearts thrown open; who, even with persons of another language, were able to make themselves understood by a sign, without need of words.² The imperial government, so afraid of secret societies, found an immense one extended everywhere,—an evident peril to itself, for it was within the state another state, possessed of all the means of action; but tolerance was a necessary consequence of the religious organization of the Romans, who never had a theocracy, because in their pontiffs the civil character took the precedence of the sacerdotal. The priests of Jupiter and of Mars were judges, soldiers, administrators; and they had learned, in the government of men, that the law touches only acts, and has no hold on the thoughts. Accordingly, they never attempted to impose their beliefs upon others, and tolerated every religion so long as it did not find expression in acts considered offensive to the Emperor or dangerous to the Empire. In the midst of the profound peace which Severus

¹ Ulpian, one of the councillors of Severus, has collected in the seventh chapter of his treatise *De Officiorum proc.* all the edicts relating to the Christians (Lactantius, *Inst. div.* V. ii. 19).

² All ecclesiastical history testifies to the constant communication among the churches. They consult one another, make known the decisions which they have reached, their sufferings, and their triumphs. Even written documents circulated rapidly. Saint Irenaeus, at Lyons, borrows several passages from Theophilus of Antioch: the author of the *Philosophumena* at Rome, and Tertullian at Carthage, copy the Lyonnese bishop.

secured to the Roman world, when no apprehension of public danger excited men's minds, the wise statesmen who ruled public affairs made no effort to proscribe the new religion, while yet leaving it under the menace of Trajan's rescript. This rescript it was impossible to repeal so long as the Caesars retained the religion of their fathers; for the title of Pontifex Maximus was equivalent at Rome to the oath taken by the kings of France on their coronation day, to preserve the orthodox religion and to tolerate no heretics within their domains.¹

This partial toleration assured to the Church only an uncertain peace, for the best of the pagans resembled the historian Dion Cassius, a timorous spirit, the foe of all violence, who at the same time wished to have the Christians punished, because in his judgment innovators in religion were of necessity innovators in polities and instigators of disorder.² From time to time a popular outbreak made a few victims, or an over-zealous governor applied the old laws of the Empire. Severus at first manifested toward the Christians only great indifference; for he saw among them merely "carders, fullers, and shoemakers,"³ and it did not seem to him that an Emperor had anything to fear from this God of the lower classes. It is not certain that he sent any one, before the year 202, into exile, or to the quarries whence Marcia, under Commodus, had released them;⁴ and the Christians were without doubt included in the favor which he accorded "to the sectaries of the Jewish superstition,"—that of being eligible to municipal honors, with release from obligations contrary to their beliefs.⁵ There were

¹ Oath of Louis XIII. at his coronation: . . . *Outre je tascheroy à mon pouvoir, en bonne foy, de chasser de ma juridiction et terras de ma sujétion tous hérétiques dénoncés par l'Église* (*Le Cérémonial françois*, by Théod. Godefroy, 1649).

² Dion, iii. 36.

³ Origen, *Contra Celsum*, iii. 55.

⁴ After having enumerated those whom the Christian communities assisted,—the poor, orphans, old servants, and the shipwrecked,—Tertullian (who, however, has a habit of extreme exaggeration) adds: *Et si qui in metallis, et si qui in insulis vel in custodiis, ex causa Dei sectae* (*Ap.* 39). We have seen above (Vol. VI. p. 469, note 1) that Marcia had obtained the release of those who were in the mines of Sardinia: and there is no reason to think that the measure may not have been general.

⁵ *Digest*, I. 2, 3, sec. 3. This interpretation is supported by the treatise *De Idololatria*, in which Tertullian recites what "the Christian magistrate" must refuse to do. We see also by the *Acta martyrum* that judges sought to substitute a political accusation for a religious one, demanding of the Christians brought before them not, "Are you Christians?" but "Have you attended unlawful assemblies?" The teaching of the Jews was public. . . .

even some of them among his attendants. Before he became emperor a Christian had healed him of some disease; and after his accession to the throne he caused search to be everywhere made for this individual, and gave him a position in the imperial household.¹ There were other Christians in the palace, if the cele-



GRAFFITO OF A CRUCIFIED FIGURE WITH AN ASS'S HEAD.²

brated *graffito* of a crucified man with the head of an ass, found lately on the Palatine, is, as seems probable, of this time. We know, moreover, that Caracalla had a Christian nurse,³ and that

Judei palam lectitant, rectigalis libertas vulgo aditur sabbatis omnibus (*Tertullian, Apol.* 18), and the government saw to it that no one should disturb their religious service (*Philosoph.* ix. 12). They received this right from Augustus (*Josephus, Ant. Jud.* xvi. 6, 2).

¹ *Tertullian, Ad Scap.* 4.

² The figure on the cross is looking at a person below him whose arm is raised in the attitude of adoration. The Greek legend below, badly engraved, signifies: "Alexamenos adores (his) God,"—evidently a sarcasm against some comrade in service in the palace of the Caesars. Near this *graffito* which is now in the Kircher Museum—these words have been found engraved: *Alexamenos fideliſ*. Father Garucci, who published this caricature in 1857, believes its date to be early in the third century, because at this epoch the pagans accused their opponents of adoring an ass's head. In 1882 a fresco was discovered at Pompeii, representing a parody of the Judgment of Solomon,—doubtless executed for the house of some inhabitant of that pleasure-loving city who wished to make sport of the Jews, his neighbors.

³ *Lacte Christiano educatus* (*Tertullian, ibid.*).

when a boy he was so enraged because one of his playmates was scourged for being of the Jewish or Christian religion, that he for a long time refused to see those who had beaten the child.¹ When we read in the *Digest* that Severus ordered persons accused of holding unlawful assemblies to be brought before the city prefect, we may conclude from this, since the guarantees of justice are increased in proportion to the higher rank of the judge, that the rescript must have been favorable to the Christians: the old, harsh law against associations was about to be tempered by political prudence. The same Emperor authorized poor people throughout the Empire to form colleges with monthly assessments.² As a matter of fact, this rescript was favorable to the Christians, and we have no right to say that Severus did not think of them in writing it.³

But the Emperor disliked tumult of any sort, and the religious disputes occasioned a great deal, especially when Tertullian joined in them, as he constantly did. This son of a centurion was a man of strife. He made attacks in his own defence, and struck at all about him, hurling invectives equally at the pagans, their magistrates, their gods, "admitted to heaven by a decree of the Senate," and at those of his brethren whom he treated as heretics,⁴—never dreaming that the orthodox were reserving the same lot for himself. In a recently discovered fragment of Clement of Rome is found this prayer to God: "It is thou, Almighty King, who hast given the kingdom to our sovereigns that we might be in subjection to them. Grant them, O Lord, health and peace, that they may without hindrance exercise the power which thou hast confided unto them over all existence. Direct, O Lord, their will

¹ Spart., *Caracalla*, 1.

² . . . *Permittitur tenuioribus stipem menstruum . . . non tantum in Urbe, sed et in Italia et in provinciis . . . divus Severus rescripsit* (*Digest*, xlvi. 22, 1). He prohibited them in the armies (*iud.*), where they were nevertheless formed. Cf. L. Renier, *Inser. d'Alg.* 70.

³ Tertullian attests (*Apol.* 39) that this custom of furnishing the *menstruum stipem* existed among the Christians; they had, then, taken advantage of the law of Severus. Yet he says that the pretext for the persecution was the unlawful assembling (*De Iren.* 13). Severus, who merely proposed to check the propagation of the new religion, may only have struck a blow at the meetings which had not assumed the legal character of the burial societies.

⁴ He refuses to them the right of discussion, and treats them as condemned without appeal. In the *De Praeser. adv. haeret.* he opposes to them only the judicial form of the ordinance. "You have on your side," he says to them, "neither time nor prescriptive right;" and this argument suffices for him.

according to right and in conformity with what is agreeable unto thee, so that, using authority with mildness, they may find thee favorable . . ."¹ This is the attitude of the primitive Christians, of the Apostles Paul and Peter, after them of a Bishop of Rome at the end of the first century, and of Theophilus of Antioch in the middle of the second. How different these holy men are from the fiery Carthaginian writing, in his treatise *De Idololatria*, a veritable declaration of war against pagan society! In another² we hear this repeated cry of revolt: "It is our business to contend against the institutions of the ancients, the laws of our masters;"³ and this moral revolt was legitimate, since the imperial government, not comprehending the sacred rights of conscience, had treated the Christian belief as a crime. The life of Christians Tertullian would have sad and sombre, ever in sackcloth and ashes, in prayers and tears. "The woman who does not live like a repentant and mourning Eve, is condemned and already dead. Her ornaments are the trappings of her burial."⁴ And this severity accorded so well with the spirit of the Church that the authority of the priest of Carthage, notwithstanding his fall, was very great, and has remained so to this day. "Give me the master" (*Da magistrum*),⁵ Saint Cyprian was accustomed to say, when he asked for a book of the celebrated doctor; and Bossuet, who often copied Tertullian, speaks in very nearly the same words.

Minucius Felix has not the genius, nor has he the harsh manner of the Carthaginian; but he is even more bitter. It is not enough for him to make a laughing-stock of the gods of Rome; he tramples under foot the last homage that remains to her,—the pride in her memories. Saint Clement recognized Rome as his country; speaking of her, he says: "Our legions, our generals."⁶ Minucius is no longer a Roman; for him, the fortune of this people arose out of wickedness, its history is filled with crimes, and Rome has never been other than a den of bandits.⁷ With less wrath, though as much

¹ *I. Clem. ad Cor. chap. xxxvii.*

² *Adversus haec nobis negotium est, adversus institutiones majorum, auctoritates receptorum, leges dominantium, argumentationes prudentium (Ad Nation. 20).*

³ See also the violent outbursts of the *De Corona*, 11. This old spirit of the Church should be noted, for it reappeared as soon as the laity began to withdraw from her administration.

⁴ *De Cultu fem. i. 1.*

⁵ Saint Jerome, *De Vir. illustr.*

⁶ This is the famous *ημῶν*, which was for so many years a subject of dispute, but can be so no longer.

⁷ *Octavius*, 25.

disdain, Saint Augustine says of the glory of the Romans: *Accepterant marcedem suam, rani rancam.*

The sentiments of Minucius are those of the greater number of Christians. Sanctus, one of the martyrs of Lyons, while undergoing the torture, is asked his name, his city and country, and whether he is free or a slave. But he has no name, he has no country. To every question he gives but one answer: "I am a



SCENE OF PERSECUTION: THE ACCUSATION.¹

Christian!" It is a noble reply; but it is also very menacing. *Civis Romanus sum!* cried the Roman of the old days, attesting his nobility and his right; even the Stoic was still a citizen of the world: but the Christians, disowning their earthly fatherland, acknowledge no city but heaven.

Greece and her glories, which are those of the human mind, find no favor with them. To them, Socrates is a buffoon,² Aristotle³

¹ Fresco of the catacombs of Calixtus, over the crypt of Pope Eusebius. Unique example of a judgment-scene in primitive Christian iconography (Roller, vol. i. pl. xxvii. No. 1, and pp. 161, 162).

² *Tertullian*, 38: *Scurratissimus*.

³ *Miserum Aristotelem* (Tertullian, *De Praescr.* 7). Clement of Alexandria, on the contrary, rendered at the same period a solemn act of homage to Aristotle, copying him in his *Hypothyposes*.

a wretch, and they pronounce anathema against all the great philosophers. What a difference between the apologists of the first age and those of the second! And in the space of half a century, from Justin to Minucius Felix, from Athenagoras to Tertullian, how hatred has become envenomed! The Church, when she was mistress of the world, became a great school of respect and submission to law; but she was not so in the early centuries.

To these maledictions against history and philosophy,—that is to say, against civilization,—were added menaces against the Empire and its sacrilegious Babylon. The sect of Montanists, which increased in numbers daily, and even, if we may believe the pagan orator of the *Octavius*, all Christians,¹ announced at Rome its impending destruction, and their gloomy prophecies gave rise to the belief that they would willingly hasten that ill-fated hour. “If all others thought as you do,” said Celsus to them, “the world would become a prey to the Barbarians.”² And, in truth, it did become so when all the world believed as they did. There were at this time, indeed, in Alexandria, men such as Pantaenus, Clement, and Origen, who, sincere admirers of the ancient philosophy, would gladly have “disengaged the pearls hidden in a pernicious alloy,”³ or, as Origen said, “carried off the gold of the Egyptians to make it into sacred vessels for the altar.”⁴ But when they spoke of their contemporaries, it was with the bitterness of Tertullian. Cyprian, one of the most moderate of them, wrote in the midst of a pestilence and famine to the proconsul Demetrianus: “If I have not replied to your barking against God, it is that I may not expose our sacred truth to the outrages of dogs and swine. . . . These scourges are the divine vengeance which strikes the hardened sinner. What! you blaspheme against the true God, you persecute his servants; and you wonder that the rain does not descend upon your arid plains, that the springs are dried up, that the hail destroys your crops, and the poisoned air

¹ *Oct.* 10. The *Octavius* must have been written about the year 180, and the treatise of Celsus is probably of the same time.

² *Contra Celsum*, viii. 68. In speaking thus I merely state a fact; namely, that the Christians, after having been an element of dissolution to the pagan empire, were not able to save the Christian empire when they had become masters of it. As to the causes of the Empire’s downfall, they were many, as will later be shown; and all that is said in the present chapter proves that Christianity was one of these causes.

³ *Strom.* I. i. sect. 17.

⁴ *Epist. ad Gregor.* 1, 30.

your population? These visitations are the consequence of your iniquities!"¹ The pagans retorted in the same language, and moreover cried out: "The Christians to the lions!" On both sides passion conceived gods in its own image, angry and violent, while impassive Nature, pursuing the course of her immutable laws, bore fruitful clouds to one locality, and deadly miasmata to another.

The Romans, who had so keen a relish for tragic declamations, and the Emperor, who had himself composed them, would not perhaps have paid much attention to the sombre pictures which so many Christians unrolled before their gaze, if the new doctrine had not in other ways appeared dangerous to them.

Saint Paul had said: "Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers: for there is no power but of God."² And some years later Clement of Rome had drawn up for the churches a prayer in which he besought God to give to the Emperors health, strength, and security.³ But the spirit of submission was no longer that of even a part of the believers. Severus was a soldier. What was he to think of men who replied to Celsus, when the latter reproached them for abandoning the Empire, assailed by the Barbarians: "It is true that we do not bear arms, and that we would not, though the Emperor should try to compel us; we have another camp, where we combat for him by our prayers."⁴ As a jurist, how could he regard a sect in which it was taught that when the law of the Church is in opposition to the law of the state, it is the former which must be obeyed,⁵ "because faith does not admit the allegation of necessity."⁶ Lastly, as a ruler and the necessary conservator of an order of things which had always exacted devotion to social obligations, it was inevitable that he should seek to stay the progress of a religion whose sectaries lost their interest in public duties.

According to the ideas of the ancients, whether the state were

¹ *Ad Demetrianum*, 8. In this very spirited letter against pagan society, Cyprian also announced the approaching destruction of the world.

² *Romans* xiii. 1. ³ *II. Clem. ad Cor.* 59-72. Ed. Hilgenfeld.

⁴ Origen, *Contra Celsum*, viii. 73, 74. And conduct accorded with the language used. The recruiting officer presents to the proconsul of Africa a young man selected to be a soldier; but the young man replies that, being a Christian, he is not permitted to bear arms. For this refusal to take the military oath he was executed (Ruinart, *Acta sincera*, p. 299, *ad ann.* 295 or 296).

⁵ Origen, *Contra Celsum*, v. 37.

⁶ *Non admittit status fidei allegationem necessitatis* (Tertullian, *De Cor.* ii.).

represented by a man, a senate, or a popular assembly, and whether it were a famous city like Athens or Rome, or the most obscure municipality, the citizen owed to it all his faculties,—his valor in battle, his fortune in public necessities, his life in great perils. This absolute dependence upon the state, so much opposed to our ideas of individual liberty, had given to patriotism an energy which ours has lost; and this is why we do not comprehend, or comprehend imperfectly, so many things in ancient society. Thus in the case of the persecutions, to do justice to both sides, we must take into account the horror which men inspired who set up in opposition to the common country, bequeathed to them by their ancestors, another which they had made for themselves. “Why,” they were asked, “why do you shun municipal offices which maintain the law?” “Because in each of your cities we have another country which God has made for us,—the Church; and it is to the government of this that those of us who have authority by eloquence or moral character should be devoted.”¹ Many systems of philosophy, even the one at that time in vogue, also recommended separation from the world; but in the schools, this spirit was inoffensive, because it remained simply a psychological curiosity. In the Church, it must have appeared to the authorities as a social peril: first, because it was the vital principle of a society hostile to the established order; and next, because the refusal to occupy municipal offices disorganized the city, making public duties weigh heavier on those who accepted them.

Many other things still further scandalized the pagans. Then, as to-day, large families were honored, and the Roman law punished celibacy. Now, the Gnostic Christians—almost as numerous as the Orthodox—cursed the flesh as the principle of all evil, and practised celibate asceticism. Others, regardless even of the conditions of human life, placed among their pious books treatises “on the disadvantages of marriage.”² Some dared to think that it

¹ *Scimus, in singulis civitatibus, aliam esse patriam a verbo Dei constitutam, eos ut Ecclesiam regant hortamur qui potentes sermoni et quorum mores sani sunt* (Origen, *Contra Celsum*, viii. 75). “To-day even, in every country, we should prosecute any association propagating certain ideas promulgated by Tertullian in chapter lxxxi. of the *De Corona*, 22” (*De la Berge, Trajan*, p. 213).

² This was one of the first works of Tertullian; and Saint Jerome recommended the reading of it to Eustochia (*Ad Jovinian. i.* and *Epist. 18, ad Eustoch.*). Tertullian, however, did not himself profit by it, for he married, and in the second of his letters to his wife (*Ad Uxorem*,

would have been far better if Adam had remained in a state of virgin purity, and God had found other means of placing upon the earth human beings to worship him.¹ One of them went so far as to write: "If we have children, we desire that they may go before us into the presence of the Lord." Tertullian, it is true, who spoke thus, says of himself: "I do not dispute, I do not go to war,



A WOMAN AT PRAYER, AND THE GOOD SHEPHERD.²

and my sole care is to exempt myself from all care; I have withdrawn from the people (*secessi de populo*)."³ Or this: "We have no other interest in this world than to escape from it at the earliest moment." We might, on the other hand, accept this thought of Montanus, "Man is a lyre which the Spirit of God strikes,"⁴ if it did not by the annihilation of our will and absolute abandonment to Providence expose us to another peril; that is to say, to the

ii. 9) he draws a very beautiful picture of Christian marriage. But in the first he represents marriage to be unsuitable for believers, and makes a vow of continence. The Marcionites forbade conjugal union: Tatian condemned it; the Valentinians, Basilians, Eneratites, or Continents, did the same: Origen rendered himself incapable of it, and his imitators continued to be numerous enough as late as the fourth century to require that the first canon of the Council of Nicaea should prohibit mutilation. Other Gnostic sects destroyed marriage by community of wives. Clement of Alexandria, a contemporary of Tertullian, but of a milder character, combats, in book iii. of the *Stromata*, all these excesses, and exalts anew the sanctity of the married state. His doctrine has remained that of the Church; but the Montanist spirit, which is not dead, has covered the world with convents.

¹ We find traces of these singular opinions in Justin, Gregory of Nyssa, and Saint Augustine: Maecarius Magnes maintained that Adam made no use of marriage until after his sin.

² Painting from the Catacombs of SS. Nereus and Achilleus (Roller, pl. xlix. fig. 1).

³ Tertullian, *De Pallio*, 5.

⁴ Saint Epiphanius, *Adv. haer.* 48.

hazard of taking individual inspirations for revelations from on high.

The eloquent and gloomy declamations of Tertullian were not the rule of faith of all believers. There were certainly Christians in the army, in municipal offices, in civil functions;¹ and all did not renounce their property through apprehension of the fate of Ananias, or give up commerce and industrial pursuits for fear of infringing upon the prescribed rules of the Church with regard to lending money at interest.² There were those who, penetrated



THE GOOD SHEPHERD AND THE TWELVE APOSTLES.³

with the sweetness of the Gospels, forgot the God of inexorable vengeance, and saw only the Good Shepherd bringing back upon his shoulders the sheep which had gone astray. Those were the neophytes who remembered being fed by the Church with milk and honey "at their entrance into the land of promise;" they took delight in life, in the sunlight and the flowers, in friendship and love, as in gifts of their Heavenly Father; and they were the most numerous, because they obeyed the true laws of our nature, against which no general revolt is possible. But they were not the most zealous. Those upon whom had been poured out

¹ They were there, but in very small number. The famous words of Tertullian, "We fill the cities, the camps, the Senate" (*Apol.* 37), are contradicted by all the facts and testimonies. (See Vol. VI. p. 428.) The number of bishops found in certain countries should not mislead us in regard to the number of the faithful. "Wherever three Christians are united," says Tertullian (*Exhort. castit.* 7), "there is a church;" and the *Constitutions of the Church of Alexandria*, i. 13 (*ap.* Bunsen, *op. cit.*), require that when the members are few in number, εὰν δὲ ιγανθρία ἔπαρχει καὶ μήπον πλῆθος τεγχάνει τῶν διναμένων ψηφίσασθαι περὶ ἐπισκόπου . . . , they should seek the assistance of three judicious men sent by the neighboring churches.

² Lending at interest was considered usury, and condemned under that title.

³ Bas-relief found near the church of S. Lorenzo fuori Mura (Bosio, p. 411, and Roller, pl. xlili. fig. 2). The Good Shepherd is represented, in the centre and at the two extremities of the bas-relief, guiding "his sheep."

the wine of wrath and the intoxication of death, cried out, with Minucius Felix: "It is no longer a time to adore crosses, but to bear them;"¹ and they were the martyrs of the persecution which we are about to narrate.

II.—RESCRIPTS OF TRAJAN, MARCUS AURELIUS, AND SEVERUS.

SOPHOCLES, in his *Antigone*, had already shown in magnificent terms the opposition which may be found between civil law and natural law, "between the decrees of men and those ever-living laws which no hand has written, but which the gods have engraved on the hearts of all." The pious young girl who braves "the proud threats of a tyrant, that she may not incur the wrath of the immortals," already speaks as the martyrs will speak at a later day; and we sympathize with the poet when he nobly defends the rights of conscience. But while inspired singers are sometimes prophets of the future, the ruler is always the man of the present, and it is his duty to compel obedience to the law which his predecessors have bequeathed to him, and whose execution society demands of him.

Tertullian claims from Severus religious liberty: "It is human right (*jus humanum*)," he says, "that each one may worship whom he pleases; and it is contrary to religion to constrain to religion."² These were beautiful words spoken by the suffering Church; later the victorious Church repudiated them, and certain sects of modern times reject them still, saying to their opponents: "In the name of your principle we claim liberty; by virtue of ours, we refuse it to you."

Origen also is indignant that the Church should be included within the State; and he is right, for the spiritual tribunal ought to be shielded from all constraint. But at a future day the Papacy, with as little wisdom as the Empire, will seek, by an opposite error, to place the State within the Church.

Minucius Felix in his *Octavius*, the priest of Carthage in his *Apology*, and with them all the defenders of the new faith, plead the innocence of the Christians; and they are thoroughly right. But none of them understood that historic fatality which, in religion as well as in

¹ *Octavius*, 12: *Jam non adorandae, sed subiungendae crucis.*

² *Ad Scapul.* 2: *Non religionis est cogere religionem.*

government, obliges that which exists to seek to defend itself, and compels the old society to repulse those who assume to change its manners, ideas, and institutions. To the Romans, conservators of the ancient social order, the Christians were dangerous revolutionists ; their acts of devotion were sacrilege ; their faith, the destruction of the official worship and of the political organization of which this worship was an essential element.¹ Hence the reasoning of Tertullian, demanding that the ordinary rules of justice be applied to the Christians, is unsound, in spite of the eloquence which supports it. "All crimes," he says, "are imputed to them; but they are interrogated only on this topic,—'Are you a Christian?' · Yes.'"² This was the entire procedure ; and torture, commonly used to force the culprit to confess his crime, is used in the case of the Christian to extort from him his permission, by the denial of his faith, that the judge may declare him innocent. In case he persists, however, a more complete investigation is not necessary. The usual accusations,—adoration of an ass's head, murders of children and the eating of their flesh, incestuous orgies in the darkness of night,—all this interests the populace ; but the judge does not consider it. In Christianity he sees only mystic reveries and anti-social doctrines ; in the Christian only a public enemy who, upon the establishment of his identity as such, shall be at once thrown to the beasts. The Roman Catholic Inquisition asked no more than this to send an Albigensian or a Protestant to the stake.³

These persecutions, which excite our horror, appeared to the contemporary mind merely questions of public order. Against the Christians Rome did what modern governments do against those who attack their essential principle : but it did so after the methods of a time when penal legislation was lavish of death.⁴ This is

¹ . . . *Sacrilegiū et majestatis rei convenimur* (Tertullian, *Apol.* 10). He recognizes further on that the Emperors could not be at the same time *et Christiani et Caesares* (*ibid.* 21).

² *Confessio nominis non examinatio criminis* (*ibid.*, *Apol.* 2).

³ By the declaration of July 1st, 1686, Louis XIV. pronounced the penalty of death against those who should be found performing religious services other than Catholic (Isambert, *Coll. des anc. lois franç.* xx. 5). Down to the time of Louis XVI. Protestants were deprived of civil status, and in the present century there have been cases of *auto-da-fé* in Spain. As to sorcerers — wretched madmen whom the Church considered as imps of Satan — they were burned by thousands. In Franche-Comté there were, from 1606 to 1636, a hundred executions and sixty banishments for deeds of sorcery (*Hist. de Jussey*, by l'Abbé Coudriet, p. 379). Under Louis XV. witches were also burned (Maury, *Magie et astrologie*, p. 222) ; and only a few years ago some peasants threw into a furnace an old woman whom they believed to be a witch. [On this question, see the interesting chapter in Lecky's *Hist. of Rationalism*. — ED.]

⁴ This harshness of penal laws lasted very long. In the eighteenth century men contented

why extenuating circumstances should be recognized in favor of those who ordered persecutions, while we at the same time condemn in the strongest terms the ideas and institutions which rendered these enormities possible. There is another duty to fulfil; namely,—to distinguish among the persecutors those who yielded reluctantly and in slight measure to the passions of the times, and those who, sharing them, used cruelty instead of indulgence in the execution of unjust laws. Severus should be placed among the former; for though he was less wise than Hadrian, he was wiser than Diocletian.

Trajan had made a state crime of the public manifestation of the Christian faith:¹ but he had interdicted the seeking for this. Under Marcus Aurelius we find a decree stating: "He who by superstitious practices shall affright the inconstant souls of men, shall be banished to an island."² This rescript did not designate the Christians by name; but they were certainly included among those whom it was to affect. This was a second step towards persecution. In 202 Severus took a third. On the banks of the Nile he placed under lock and key the books of Egyptian theology, and while passing through Palestine he promulgated an edict which prohibited Christian and Jewish propagandism.

In all antiquity, religion and the state had been so closely united that a Roman could not comprehend the one without the other. It had been the same at Jerusalem: hence Rome had officially permitted the religion of the Jews, by recognizing, in the treaties made with them, their nationality. It was easy then to apply to them the rescript of Severus and to keep them shut up within their own race, the more so as they but seldom sought to escape from it. But the Christians formed a sect, and not a nation: they were recruited everywhere, even among the Barbarians. To enter into communication with the enemies of the Empire, was in itself a very grave matter; but to induce citizens

themselves with burning the books: but in the Middle Ages they burned those who wrote them. Rhébelien, even, had a poor poet hanged whose only crime was the writing of some bad verses against the government.

¹ See Vol. V. p. 289. Tertullian (*Apol.* 2) marks very correctly the character of this rescript: . . . *Inquit*, *l'avaritia et covetositas esse peccata mortalia*; and one fact, placed by Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.*, v. 21) under the reign of Commodus, shows the manner in which the law was executed (cf. Vol. V. p. 462, note 2).

² *Digest*, xlviij. 19, 30.

to abandon the national religion was nothing less than treason, and the government naturally sought to stop the desertion of these fugitives from the Roman fatherland.

The edict, however, did not go so far as to proscribe the existing Christian communities; it only tended to prevent them from spreading. Now, this prohibition was contrary to one of the most imperative commands of the evangelical law, "Go and teach all nations." It would have put a stop to conversions, and it gave authority to take action against those who sought to make them.

However, the search for Christians was not as yet commanded, since Tertullian wrote undisturbed his books which are so severe towards the pagans, and since priests could teach, heretics discuss, believers bring aid openly, as did Origen,¹ to the martyrs in prison, assist them at the tribunal, encourage them even in the amphitheatre; and finally, since, notwithstanding the very large number of bishops,² not one of them perished; to the Christians

¹ Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* vi. 3.

² In the single province of Africa, Cyprian assembled in council eighty-seven bishops (*De Haereticis baptizandis*, in Cypr. *Oper.*, p. 328), and when he suffered martyrdom in 258, he was the first African bishop who sealed his faith with his blood. The fiery Tertullian lived undisturbed even to extreme old age (*Usque ad decrepitam aetatem*. Saint Jerome, *De Vir. illustr.* 53). The policy of the persecution called that of Severus was not to attack any of the most important men, though they were very easily to be found. It has been customary to mention two bishops, Zoticus, bishop of Comana in Cappadocia, and Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons, as martyrs in this persecution. Of the first, Tillemont makes no mention, and the Bollandists say of him (July 21st): *Qui est quicquid de eius vita? non satis habemus locorum quoque tamquam*. As for the second, Saint Cyprian and Clement of Alexandria do not refer to him, though he was the most prominent of their contemporaries, and Tertullian, who often copies him, does not give him the title of martyr. The Carthaginian priest, in one of his books written after the persecution of Severus (*quum furor Severi restinctus fuerat*), and at a later date than the year 208 (cf. Noesselt, *De Vera aetate script. Tertull.*, in the Tertullian of Oehler, vol. iii. pp. 540 and 605), mentions in the same sentence Saint Justin, whom he styles "martyr," and Irenaeus, of whom he merely says that he was *omnium doctrinarum curiosissimus explorator* (*Adv. Valent.* 5). If the Bishop of Lyons had suffered martyrdom, Tertullian would have given to him the same title as to Justin. The Bollandists are reduced to saying (June 28th): *Nihil invenimus de S. Irenaeo quod esset antiquitate aliqua . . . spectabile*. The records of his martyrdom do not in fact exist, and Gregory of Tours is the first who relates it (*Gloria Mart.* 50). Saint Jerome, in the *De Vir. illustr.*, terminates the chapter which he devotes to Irenaeus (the 35th) by these words, which necessarily call for mention of the martyrdom if it had taken place: *Floruit maxime sub Commodo principe*. True, he says of him in his commentary *In Isaiam*, 64: *Diligentissime vir apostolicus scribit Irenaeus episcopus Lugd. et martyr, multarum origines explicans haec sicut*. But, on the one hand, this book of Saint Jerome having been completed later than the year 411,—that is, two centuries after the death of Irenaeus,—there may be in this an echo of the improbable legend reported by Gregory of Tours, which was at this epoch already current. On the other hand, the words *et martyr* may be a gloss slipped into the text. We know what strange liberties were taken by the copyists of manuscript or by those under whom they

there were left their chiefs and their teachers, their assemblies, and their elections, their schools of catechumens, and their cemeteries,¹—that is to say, their organization and their worship. There were executions to frighten the Church and to put a stop, by means of terror, to its propagandism. But the strokes fell only on the insignificant and the slaves, whose lives were of little consequence. The victims at this time were those enthusiasts of the lower classes who in all revolutions are the most active,—those who by their own acts designated themselves to the judge or to the mob by their ardor in seeking punishment, or those who, denounced to the magistrate by personal enemies, stood their ground in such a way as to bring them under the penalty of the law. But the vocation of martyrdom is never the lot of any but a small minority; and giving information in cases of this nature had its dangers, because the *delator* was not sure but the accused might overthrow the accusation with the single word that was asked of him: “No, I am not a Christian!” and, as we know, the informer who did not prove his statement incurred grave responsibilities.²

The edict of Severus not ordering search to be made, each governor enforced it according to his own character. He of Cappadocia, irritated against the Christians who had converted his wife, by violent tortures compelled several of them to sacrifice to the gods.³ Lyons had the same ardor for idolatry which it displayed later in

labored. The recent discovery of three letters of Saint Ignatius would be a new proof, if we may believe Cureton, in his *Corpus Ignatianum* (Berlin, 1849).

¹ The use of the cemeteries was for the first time prohibited to the Christians by an edict of Valerian (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* vi. 11; and Saint Cyprian, *Epist.* 83).

² An individual who accused Severus of magic before his elevation to empire was crucified. Macrinus caused to be put to death the *delatores*, *si non probarent* (*Capit.*, *Maer.* 12); and Gratian, later, renewed this law.—the *delator* who does not prove his accusation well-founded shall suffer the penalty which would have been inflicted on the guilty (*Cod. Theod.* ix. 1, 14). If the charge was admitted, the accuser received one fourth of the property of the condemned; it was therefore a business at once lucrative and dangerous. This legal responsibility explains why the judges should have refused to receive mere denunciations by letter, and required the presence of the *delator*. (See below, pp. 71 *et seq.*) The letter of Marcus Aurelius which circulated in the Christian schools of the time of Tertullian is absolutely false; but the penalty which it fixes for the calumniator,—*adjecta etiam accusatoribus damnatione et quidem tertiore* (*Apol.* 5),—is a characteristic feature of the morals of the age. The condemned Christians, being held as traitors, had their goods confiscated (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* vi. 2), and we have just seen that a part of them reverted to the *delator*. But their poverty rendered this profit insignificant. Hence the most usual accuser was the populace, who by their clamors, and sometimes by their acts of violence, provoked an execution.

³ Alexander, bishop of this province, was imprisoned.

behalf of the new faith. If the tradition of the Church were sufficient to dispense with all historic testimony, Saint Irenaeus perished there; but his contemporaries, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, and Saint Cyprian, know nothing of his martyrdom. The two great African cities, Carthage and Alexandria, which were rivals in magnificence,¹ were two ardent centres of religious life.² As soon as the edict of Severus became known to them, they gave loose rein to their pagan fury, and the magistrates, formally summoned to fulfil their legal duty, yielded to the popular pressure. Many victims are mentioned in Egypt,³ among whom was the father of Origen. Yet at Alexandria the bishop, Demetrius, the teacher of Clement and Origen, despite the ardor of his zeal, escaped; it was the same in all the great cities,—at Carthage, Antioch, Smyrna, and Rome. The Roman clergy were already numerous, and angry dissensions were in existence among them at this very moment; none of their members, however, appear to have been disturbed: Pope Zephyrinus and Calixtus, who was at that time very prominent, certainly were not. In the province of Africa, one of the latest evangelized, those who perished were almost all obscure Christians.

¹ Herod., vii. 6.

² See, Vol. VI. p. 466, note 3, the riots caused at Carthage by the priestesses of the goddess Caelestis. As for Alexandria, it was the great laboratory of ideas and beliefs.

³ It is doubtful, however, whether Christianity was then very widely spread in Egypt outside the capital, and whether, consequently, the persecution made many martyrs there. Down to Demetrius, who at that time occupied the episcopal chair of Alexandria, all Egypt had had but a single bishop (cf. Eusebius, *Ann.* i. 354, Pocock's trans.), while the province of Africa, evangelized at so late a period (Tillemont, *Mém. ecclés.* i. 754), reckoned a very great number of them. But in Alexandria the persecution was violent. Cf. Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* vi. 1: *μάλιστα ἐπλήθευ ἐπ' Ἀλεξανδρείας.*

⁴ Engraved stone (cornelian, 14 mill. by 11) of the *Cabinet de France*, No. 1,749 of the catalogue, and Collection de Luynes, No. 98. M. Chabouillet thinks he recognizes the Emperor Alexander Severus in the warrior who is crowning the city. Bronze coins struck at Antioch during the reign of this Emperor bear the same types. See, in Vol. V. p. 155, the statue of the Vatican, another personification of the city of Antioch.



THE CITY OF ANTIOCH PERSONIFIED⁴

The persecution began at Carthage after a riot, the populace seeking to force the governor to close the cemeteries of the Christians.¹ Before this extreme was reached, there had certainly been acts of violence in the streets; and the more the Christians gained assurance by their increasing number,² the more determination and haughtiness they manifested in their language towards the pagans, the more odious their adversaries would consider these men who seemed to desire to set themselves above other citizens by manifesting contempt for their gods, their festivals, and their pleasures.³ Thus, when Rome in 204 displayed the extreme of magnificence in celebrating the Secular Games,⁴ Tertullian had just written, with his usual vehemence, a book against all public amusements.

The first martyrs of Carthage were the twelve Scillitans, in 180,⁵ among whom were several women. In the second "combat,"

¹ In remembrance of the ten plagues of Egypt, ecclesiastical writers have maintained that the Church has suffered ten persecutions. They reckon four anterior to Severus,—under Nero (see Vol. V, pp. 337 *et seq.*), Domitian (*ibid.* p. 209), Trajan (*ibid.* pp. 288 *et seq.*), and Marcus Aurelius (*ibid.* pp. 493 *et seq.*); that of Severus—which is known to no pagan writer, and of which Lactantius does not speak—is counted the fifth, and represented as very violent. It is strange that Dion Cassius, so prolix a writer, has not once named the Christians, and that in all the *Augustan History*, several editors of which lived under Constantine, we find barely a few words about them. Evidently these persecutions, which for fifteen centuries have disturbed the human conscience, took place in the inferior strata of society, or at least did not agitate the surface, and, down to Decius, were only local police measures or popular excesses.

² We know the exaggerations of Justin (*Dial. cum Tryph.*), of Saint Irenaeus (*Adv. haer.* i. 3), and of Tertullian (*Ad Scap.* 2, and *Apol.* 37); they are famous. The *Octavius* of Minucius Felix, written towards the close of the second century, exhibits the Christians as very few in number, and very obscure. At the middle of the century following, Origen, comparing them to the mass of the pagans, yet said: ὡς νῦν παντες ὀλγητοί (*Contra Cel.* viii. 69). In Syria, the province most easily opened to Christianity, "no Christian catacomb anterior to the fourth century, no well-authenticated Christian monument reared before 'the peace of the Church,' has up to the present time been discovered" (*De Vogué, Inscr. sémitiques*, p. 55). Still, it is certain that the number of the Christians increased greatly during the long repose which they enjoyed between Severus and Decius.

³ The terms of reproach applied to the Christians by the pagans are enumerated in the *Octavius* of Minucius Felix by Caecilius, the advocate of paganism.

⁴ Since the establishment by Augustus of the *Ludi saeculares*, to commemorate the founding of Rome, these games had been celebrated by several of the Emperors. To conform to their name and to the intention of Augustus, they should have occurred at regular intervals once in each century (*saeculum*); but such was by no means the case. They were celebrated by Augustus in the year 17 B. C.; by Claudius in 47 A. D.; by Domitian in 88; by Antoninus in 147; by Septimius Severus in 204; and they were observed for the last time by Philippos 248 A. D., just a thousand years from the founding of the city.

⁵ I place their execution at this date, following M. L. Renier, who has with correct judgment recognized the consuls of A. D. 180, *Pruesente II et Condiano coss.*, in the consuls mentioned in the *Aeta*, whose names have been corrupted by the copyists. What is said by Tertullian, *De Corona initia*, concerning the long peace which the Christians enjoyed in Africa before

which took place the tenth year of the reign of Severus (202),¹ the slave Felicitas and the matron Perpetua also perished, with others who made confession.

Their sacrifice is related at length in the *Martyrology*, in accounts filled with miraculous visions and heroic deaths. These soldiers of Christ were noble combatants, but of a sort hitherto unknown. In ancient times a man died for his country,—that is to say, for his fellow-citizens; in the first century of the Empire, Thrasea and many others died for human justice: now men died for the sake of heaven. In three phrases may be summed up the vast revolution which in three centuries had occurred in men's ideas: the *civis Romanus sum* of the great days was an utterance of patriotic pride; when the Stoic called himself *civis mundi*, he still did not deny his country: but the Christian who, to the question of the magistrate, "Who are you?" rejoined "*Servus Christi*," was no longer of this world. This change proclaims that in the state now about to be formed, ties of family and of country will be to many as if they did not exist. The disciples of the new faith had been forbidden to take thought for the morrow. "Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. . . . Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." Together with the noblest words on the duties of charity, justice, and the love of one's neighbors are evangelic commands which have cost humanity many tears, and instigated many separations. "I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother: . . . and a man's foes shall be they of his own

A. D. 202, justifies our opinion. The Scillitan martyrs appear to have been the first in Africa (Ruinart, *Acta sincera*, p. 34), as those of Lyons were the first in Gaul. Sulpicius Severus (ii. 46) says in reference to the tardy evangelization of Gaul: *Serius trans Alpes Dei religione suscepta*. On the order of proceedings followed in the trials of the Christians, see the learned paper by M. Le Blant in the *Mém. de l'Acad. des inscr.* vol. xxx. part second. The author makes a distinction between the *Acta*, or transcriptions, more or less exact, of the judicial examinations, which the Christians sometimes obtained by payment of money, and the *Passiones*, in which the historical foundation is burdened with marvellous legends. The *Acta proconsularia* of Saint Cyprian (see in chap. xvi.) and the *passio* of Saint Perpetua give a good understanding of these two kinds of documents. On the sources of certain martyrologies, see another article of M. Le Blant, 1879.

¹ Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* vi. 2.

household." And to his disciples asking what reward they should have for following him, Jesus replied: "There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or mother, or father, or children, or lands, for my sake, . . . but he shall receive eternal life." We must observe this side of Christianity; for these words still exercise their influence, and human society has been profoundly affected by them. Before giving rise to monastic orders, to all macerations of the flesh, and to heroic acts of devotion which are still exhibited,¹ they were the inspiration of martyrs. Read the *Acts of Saint Perpetua*. It has been said that certain pages seem to have been written with a pen plucked from an angel's wing, so touching is the poetry found in them. I grant it; and if this death was not courted,²—if, dragged against her will before the judge, Perpetua refuses to conceal her faith,—it is the sentiment of duty and honor which animates her, and her courage is sublime. But as a historian of human deeds, I must in the saint see also the woman who publicly defies the laws of her country, and must exhibit the mother abandoning her child, the daughter exposing her aged father to every insult. "Have pity on my white locks," he said to her; "have pity on thy father! Behold thy mother, thy brothers, thy son, who cannot live without thee! Suffer thy pride (*animos*) to bend; do not condemn us all to mortal woes!"³ And he kissed her hands, he threw himself at her feet. But she exclaimed: "Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity; I know you not." The procurator also cried out to her: "Spare then thy father, spare thy son!" As a last trial, he caused her father to be beaten with rods in her presence. She persisted; and it is her glory, that also of the Church which knew how to inspire such sacrifices, and gathered the fruit of them. But it must be said, this young woman who went to her death crushing the hearts of all her family, is a heroine of a peculiar nature. She died for herself in order to live eternally; but true heroes die for others: the sister of charity does so.

¹ By missionaries and sisters of charity.

² It must have been; since the law forbade searching for Christians, and attacked those only who offered themselves as martyrs.

³ *Ni universos nos extermines* (Ruinart, *Acta sincera*). Her father goes away. "I thank God," she says, "that I have been several days without seeing my father; his absence permits me to enjoy a little rest" (*Ibid.*). Saint Ireneus of Sirmium will speak in the same way (Ruinart, *Acta sincera*, i. 430 *et seq.*).

Modern theologians continue to say: "The question of salvation is a personal question, and it matters little that the family or the city be broken up by it,"¹—as if the city and the family were not of divine institution, since they are a necessity of our nature! Christianity loves death, adorning it like a bride impatiently awaited, calling it life: *Vicit*,—writing upon the tomb of the



BURIAL VAULTS (CUBICULA). WITH PAINTINGS IN FRESCO.²

believer, "He lives for immortality." Thus men felt in the primitive Church. The more tears and broken hearts there were around these voluntary victims, the more meritorious appeared the sacrifice, and the higher the martyr seemed to ascend into the glory of God, whence he would protect those whom he left behind. Heaven and earth were henceforth but one city, having in the saints its patrons, and in its divine membership the company of

¹ Abbé Freppel, *Saint Cyprien*, p. 53.

² Sepulchres adjoining the Jewish catacombs of the *Via Appia* (Roller, *op. cit.* pl. iv No. 2).

the faithful,¹—a beautiful and poetic belief, which again found Jacob's ladder with “the angels of the Lord ascending and descending upon it.” Accordingly, each community was happy and proud of these immolations. Sometimes friends and neighbors, in their fierce piety, exalted the ardor of the martyrs: they encouraged them with the words of the Apostles, and showed them all the celestial army present at their triumph, and ready to receive them into glory. Origen urges his father to the execution:² Numidicus “with a saintly joy” beholds his wife burning on the pile; the mother of Saint Symphorian, her son going to death; another, her husband in the midst of tortures. “Raise your eyes on high,” those who stood by cried to the martyrs, “and you shall see him for whom you fight.” The love of God takes the place in their hearts of all those affections which God has nevertheless made a duty in bestowing them upon us. Heaven is opened to their gaze; of the earth they see, they feel nothing, not even the claws and teeth of the lions which rend their flesh.³ Dragged in the arena by a furious bull, Blandina and Perpetua “converse with the Lord,” and, being taken up bleeding, they ask when the “combat” will begin; a divine frenzy had possessed them. Man must have an ideal; it is the honor of Christianity that its own was placed so high, at a time when all others had ceased from the earth. At the same time it was perilous to place this ideal so far from earth,—not from the enjoyments which are to be found here, but from the duties which we are here required to fulfil.

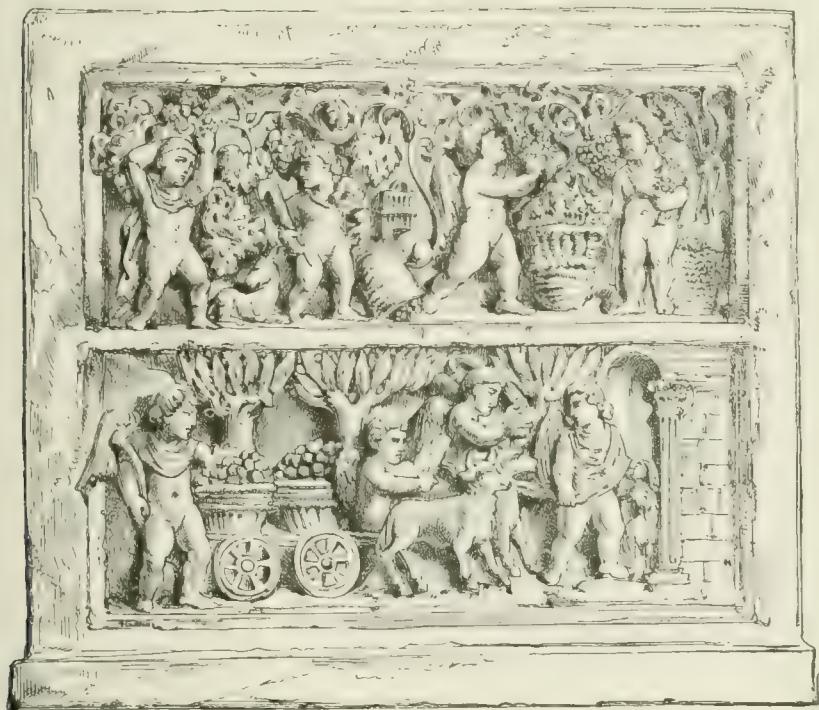
First by mysticism, then in trances, lastly, by visions, the soul ascends to the heavenly regions, and while still attached to the body, loses itself in God. During this intense concentration of the thought upon a single object, the physical sensibility is abolished by a sort of temporary paralysis of the nervous system, which causes even the feeling of pain to disappear, as we suppress it naturally by anaesthetics. This condition—which is now well understood—is called, in the language of the Church, “rapture;” in the language of the world, the enthusiasm which makes the

¹ The expression is Saint Augustine's: . . . *tanquam patronis* (*De Cura pro mortuis*, 19). An inscription calls them . . . *apud Deum adorati* (*De Rossi, Recen. sotter.* ii. 383).

² Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.*, vi. 2. In his treatise *Ad Martyres*, 27, Origen shows all heaven contemplating the combat and the victory of “the confessors.”

³ *Nihil crus sentit in nervo, cum animus in caelo est* (Tertullian, *Ad Mart.* 2).

strength of heroes: that of Mucius Scaevola burning his hand in the fire of the altar, and that of martyrs tranquilly enduring the severest tortures. "Look us well in the face," said a martyr to a pagan present in the prison at the Christian's last repast,— "look at me well, that you may recognize me at the Last Judgment."



VINTAGE SCENES ON A SARCOPHAGUS IN THE LATERAN MUSEUM.¹

This ardent faith, these tragic spectacles, were disastrous to paganism. Conscience revolted at witnessing such deaths, and men who had come to these scenes as to an entertainment, went away troubled in heart and asking themselves: "What can this faith be then which gives such courage and such hope?" The blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church,² which, "like a vine whose

¹ Roller, pl. xliv. fig. 3. Symbolical representation of the harvest made by the Church "in the vineyard of the Lord." The figures on the sarcophagi represented on the next page are as follows: Above, at the left, Jesus at the tomb of Lazarus; Saint Peter and the cock; Moses receiving the law. In the medallion, the dead commemorated by the sarcophagus. At the right, the sacrifice of Abraham, and Pilate about to wash his hands. Below, Moses and the pillar of fire; Daniel and the lions; Jesus healing a blind man; Jesus blessing the bread and fishes.

² Tertullian, *Apol.* 50.

shoots are cut back, became the more fruitful for it.”¹ Oftentimes even the magistrate would gladly have dismissed the “devoted,” who came and asked for death with the fervor of a Hindoo throwing himself under the car of Juggernaut.² The imperial officer required only a word from them, an appearance of submission to the law. “Since you believe that there is but one God, sacrifice to Jupiter only,” was the appeal often made to them.³ But the martyrs refuse, and the Church encourages them in their noble obstinacy. Tertullian, Cyprian, Origen even drew up manuals for “preparation” for martyrdom.⁴ The *passiones*, read in church after the gospel, constituted another preparation. What contagious ardor was awakened in these assemblies where men were taught that the martyr became “the companion of Christ in his suffering,”⁵ or when the deacon read the letter of Saint Ignatius to the Romans who desired to save him from execution: “I write to you living, but enamoured of death.⁶ I am afraid of your affection! What is death for Christ? A beautiful sunset preceding the radiant dawn of a divine day. I am God’s wheat; the teeth of the beasts will crush me, and I shall become the purified bread of the Lord. Ah, let me enjoy my lions!”⁷

¹ Saint Justin, *Dial. cum Tryph.* p. 337 (1636).

² Clement of Alexandria, blaming what he calls “a brutal impatience for death,” adds: “Their death is not a martyrdom, but a suicide: they are like the Indian gymnosopists, who light their own funeral pile” (*Strom.* iv. 4); and the sixtieth canon of the Council of Elvira contains the same teaching. This intensity of heavenly love, which tends to absolute separation from the world and union with God, is a psychological condition which is also found among the sūfis of Persia and elsewhere. See the translation of the *Fruit Garden* of Sa’adi by Barbier de Meynard.

³ *Acta S. Tarachi* in 304; *S. Philae* in 302.

⁴ Le Blant, *op. laud.* p. 65. The fourth book of the *Stromata* of Clement of Alexandria is of this character. It was customary even to employ, in preparing the martyrs for the torture, prolonged fastings, which heightened the mystical exaltation; and to *martyribus incertis* was served a bountiful repast, ending with narcotic or intoxicating draughts, so as to prevent a failure, by delivering to the executioner only an inert body no longer sensible to pain. . . . *Conlito nero, tanquam antidoto præmedicatum ita enervatus ut panis unguis titillatus (hoc enim ebrietas sentiebat) . . . respondere non poterit amplius, atque . . . cum singultus et ructus solos haberet . . . discessit* (Tertullian, *De Jejunio*, 12). Saint Augustine (*Tractatus*, xxvii. on St. John, sect. 12) makes allusion to this usage: . . . *quia bene manducaverat et bene biberat, tanquam illa esca saginatus et illo calice ebrius, tormenta non sensit.*

⁵ *Quid gloriosius quam collegim passioris cum Christo factum fuisse?* (Letters of Roman Confessors to Saint Cyprian: Cypr., *Op. Ep.* 31.)

⁶ Ἐρῶν τοῦ ἀποθανεῖν (*Ep. ad Rom.*). On the Letters of Saint Ignatius, see Vol. V. p. 289, note 3.

⁷ Ὀναιμην τῶν θηρίων (*ibid.*). It cannot be doubted that in the narrative of the theatrical

With the account of the tortures the martyrologists mingled that of the visions which the confessors had had in the exaltation of faith and in the fever of the last day, or of those which were attributed to them to exhibit the promised reward. "We suffered," says Satur, one of the companions of Perpetua, "and we forsook our bodies. Four angels bore us to the East, towards an intense light. Arriving at a garden where rose-trees tall as cypresses were perpetually strewing the earth with their flowers, we approached a place whose walls seemed to be made of light. At the gate four angels were standing: they clad us in white robes of dazzling purity; and when we had entered, we heard voices repeating: 'Holy, holy, holy!' In the midst we saw as it were a man seated; he had white hair and the countenance of a young man. The angels raised us up, and he gave us the kiss of peace; and the four and twenty elders seated at his side said unto us: 'Go and be happy!' And, indeed, we experienced more delight than we had ever known in the flesh." Thus "the joy of heaven rose out of the dismal prison, and the crown of flowers bloomed above the bloody thorns."¹ In this literature of martyrdom, which is so entirely a new thing, we still find the same inability of the imagination to picture the abode of the blessed; it was, however, a realm of poetry hitherto unknown, and enthusiastic souls were content with it.

The pagans said of the martyrs: "These men are mad." Bossuet, taking up the word to extol it, celebrates "the madness of Christianity;" and we still praise "the foolishness of the cross."

To an ostentatious display of piety and courage by the confessors, which provoked the pagans and impelled them to new acts of violence, Clement prefers the prudence which, without cowardly concessions, avoids peril;² Saint Cyprian invites martyrdom, yet will not have men hasten to meet it;³ Saint Peter of Alexandria even consents that his life should be ransomed by payment of money;⁴

sueide of Peregrinus, Lucian had in mind the martyrs who also "offered themselves voluntarily to death."

¹ See, in addition, the fine peroration of the *De Mortalitate* of Saint Cyprian.

² *Strom.* iv. 4, 17. He himself retired from Alexandria at the moment of persecution.

³ See Saint Cypr., *Ep. 83: Letter to the Clergy and the People of Carthage.*

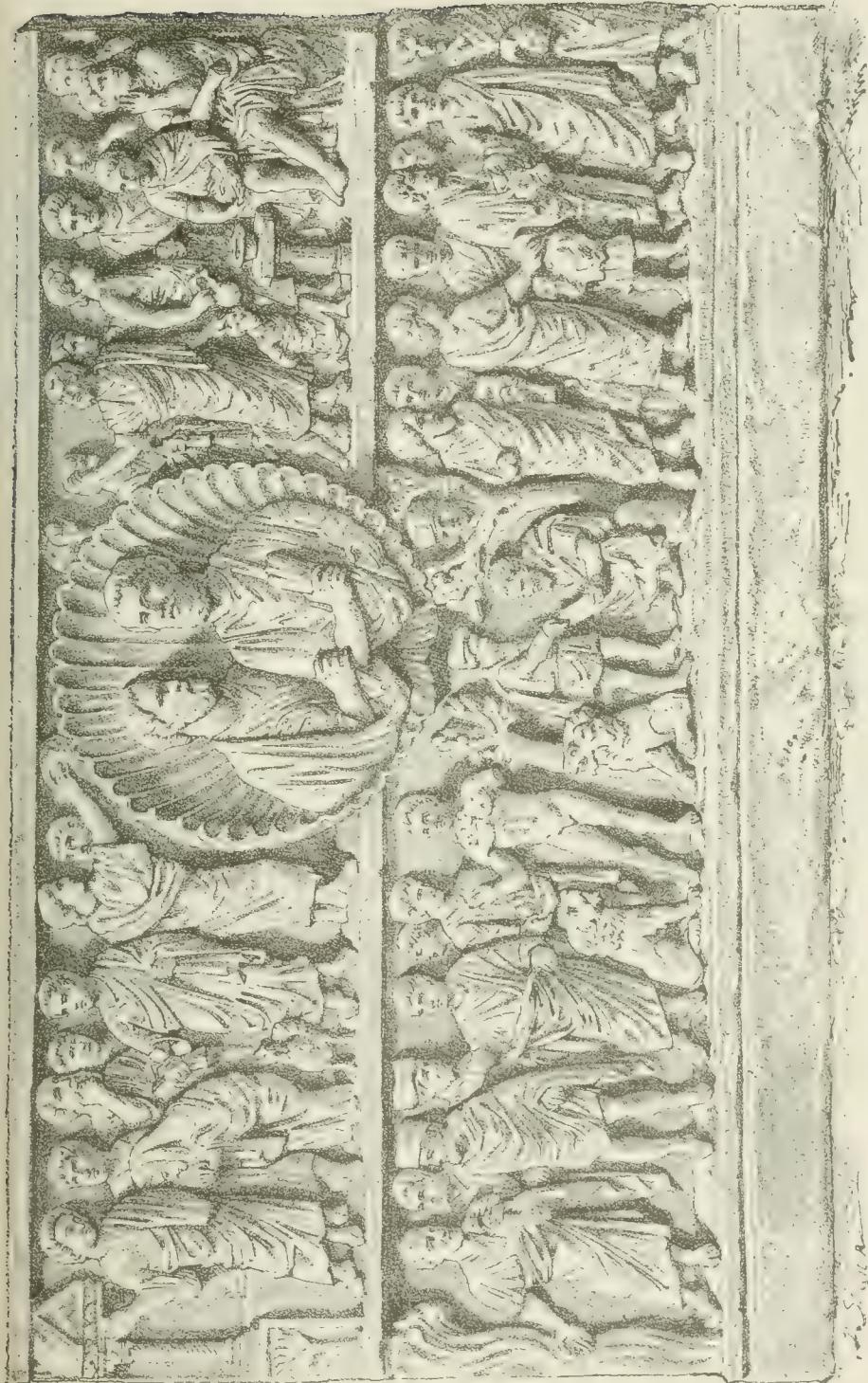
⁴ *Paciscarcum delatore, vel milite, vel furnuendo aliquo praesida* (Tertullian, *De Fuga*, 12). Churches obtained immunity from disturbance by payment of a sum of money: "in which," says Peter of Alexandria (*Can.* 12), "they displayed more attachment to Jesus Christ than to their money: carrying out the precept of Scripture: 'The ransom of a man's life is his riches'" (*Prov.* xiii. 8; cf. Tillemont, *Hist. des Emp.* iii. 101). He says in addition: *Iis qui prenumit*

and letters of ransom were numerous.¹ Indeed, Jesus himself had retired at the approach of his enemies, “because his hour was not yet come;” and he had said to his disciples: “And when they persecute you in this city, flee into the next.” These words have become the doctrine of the Church.

We admire the holy enthusiasm “of the soldiers of Christ,” — these sacrifices which are the highest honor of human nature; and we know that martyrs make causes to triumph. History must take great account of this singular condition of men’s minds, because it explains the approaching revolutions; but it is also the duty of history to note, as one of the important facts in human annals, the rise in the Western world of a new spirit, whose influence still endures, and has impelled so many holy men to break with the duties of social life. After persecutions had ceased, this exclusive love of heaven continued to make earth unattractive, and withdrew from the period to which they belonged, great multitudes of men who by remaining in it would have aided in rendering its life more pure. Before Constantine, this spirit makes martyrs; after him, it will make monks, occupied at first with their own salvation, afterwards with that of others, and destined to be organized as powerful communities in the bosom of civil society, in order to lead and dominate it. Without the monastic institution, which

*dederunt . . . crimen intendi non potest (ibid. apud Labbe, Concil. i. 955; cf. Fleury, Hist. Eccl., iii. 51, and Le Blant, *Pépitière et le 3^e Courrier*, in the *Mémo de l’Acad. des inscr.* vol. xxviii. 2d part).*

¹ “The bishops,” says Fleury (*ibid.* ii. 8c), “approved this conduct.” Not all; but the usage was certainly common, for Tertullian, with his customary vigor, attacks (*De Fuga*, 12) “those who purchase by tribute the right to be Christians,” and Saint Cyprian, in his letter to Antonianus, bishop of Numidia, enumerating the various “lapses,” expresses the opinion that the least culpable is that of a Christian who, having had occasion to procure for himself a letter of ransom, goes to the magistrate, or sends another in his place, and says: “Being a Christian, it is not permitted to me to sacrifice unto idols; but I give money not to do it.” *Is cui libellus acceptus est dicit . . . cum occasio libelli fuisset oblata . . . ad magistratum veni . . . a libellato libellatio exponitur* (Cyp., *L.*, 33, ad Ant.; edit. Baluze). He often speaks of the *libellatici* (see *ibid.*, index, at this word). By these letters, in which there seems to have been quite a traffic, the Christians acknowledged that they had sacrificed to the gods, although they had not done so, or the judge declared that those who had obtained them should no longer be disturbed (Lambert, *Rem. sur les œuvres de Saint Cyprien*, p. 353), which reminds us of the French cards of citizenship during the Reign of Terror. In both cases, tolerance was purchased by payment of money. This was not a tribute similar to the didrachma of the Jews under the Romans, and the *leptai* of the Greeks under the Mohammedans; the government had imposed no tax on the Christians: *Nihil nobis Caesar indixit in hunc modum stipendiariae sectae* (Tertullian, *De Fuga*, 12). It was an extortion of the magistrates, which the government connived at. This ransom, being in fact a penalty, appeared to satisfy the law and dispense with shedding the blood of inoffensive men.



MARCOPIAGUS IN ALTO-RELIEVO IN THE MUSEUM OF THE LATERAN, FOUND AT S. PAOLO FUORI LE MURA
(ROLLER, PLATE LXV. PAGE 281). SEE PAGE 67, NOTE 1.

grows out of the idea which the martyrs followed, the Church would not have become a persecutor in its turn; at least it would not have been so with the same perseverance.

To the survivors of exile, of prison, of tortures, a sanctity was accorded which impelled some of them to usurp episcopal functions, by giving letters of communion to *lapsi*; that is, to brethren who had denied their faith. There were at Carthage and Rome great debates on this subject, to which the Letters of Saint Cyprian bear testimony. It was the beginning of a poetical and dangerous doctrine, that of indulgences founded on the merits of saints.

In the case of the confessors whom the magistrates had not spared, their death being for the faithful a cause of edification and of just pride, the hagiographers of later ages strangely multiplied their number. The murder, for instance, of the nine thousand Lyonnese, slaughtered with their bishop, Saint Irenaeus, by the legions of Severus, and the rivers of blood which flow through the city,¹ form a legend which even those who would be most disposed to swell the number of the martyrs do not venture to accept. The wise Tillemont does not mention them, nor does he seem any more certain that Pope Victor suffered martyrdom at Rome,² or that Severus put to death Saint Andæolus by ordering his head to be cleft into four parts with a wooden sword; and the manner in which he quotes the *Acts* of Saint Felicitas and of her seven sons—a legend copied from that of the seven Maccabaean brothers—indicates, under his prudent reserve, doubts which are justified by the strange details given by the martyrologist.³

The friendship which unites the interlocutors in the dialogue of Minucius shows that Christians and pagans could live on very good terms with each other; and many governors, seeing, like Seneca's brother and like Festus, with the utmost indifference practices which did not endanger the public order, favored the

¹ . . . *Et per plateas flumina currerent de sanguine* (Greg. of Tours, i. 27).

² Fleury (*Hist. écol.*, i. 522) makes him die a natural death; and this is the conclusion to be drawn from chap. xxiv. of Saint Jerome, in his *De Vir. illustr.*, devoted to Saint Victor.

³ Like Tillemont, the Chevalier de Rossi places the martyrdom of Saint Felicitas and of her seven sons under Marcus Aurelius. M. Aubé (*Hist. des perséc.*, pp. 438 *et seq.*) combats this opinion; at most, he would consent to date back the punishment of Felicitas to the reign of Severus. But the reasons which he gives do not allow him to accept the authenticity of these *Acts*. I therefore dismiss this legend from the reign of Severus, as M. Aubé has dismissed it from the reign of Marcus Aurelius.

trade in letters of ransom. Tertullian mentions some who, gentle by nature and sceptics in religion, repudiated the obligation to put innocent beings to death, and determined to go back to Rome "without a spot of blood on their fasces."¹ Asper declared openly that he was disinclined to prosecutions of that kind. When he had to judge a Christian, he only feigned to put him to the torture, was satisfied with the slightest word, and set him free without compelling him to offer sacrifice. Severus furnished them the reply which permitted him to discharge them. A Christian is brought before Pudens with a letter of accusation: he tears up the letter, sets the captive at liberty, and declares that he will not receive an accusation except when the accuser appears personally at the tribunal, in conformity with the law. Candidus treated them as contentious persons, and sent them back to their towns with these words: "Go, and be at peace with your fellow-citizens." "Unhappy men," said another to them, "if you are resolved to perish, are there not ropes or precipices enough for you?" and he drives them from his tribunal. The governor of Syria opens to Peregrinus the doors of the prison. "knowing him to be foolish enough to be willing to die through vainglory."² On one occasion, in Africa, where Severus was proconsular legate, the populace clamored for the death of several Christians, members of the senate of Carthage; but he resisted the outcries of the infuriated mob.³ Later, when Emperor, he recalled Antipater, a governor of

¹ *Ad Scap.* 4. A Christian magistrate, Studius, possessing the *jus gladii*, asked Saint Ambrose if it was contrary to the faith to put to death guilty persons; the saint answered: *Scio plerosque gentilium gloriari solitos, quod incurvantam de administratione provinciali securim revexerint* (*Epist. xxv. sec. 3*).

² Tertullian, *Ad Scap.* 5: Lucian, *Percygr.* 14. This is the person who burned himself at Olympia. He had been a Christian, and was at that time regarded as a martyr. The account of Lucian at once proves the fellowship of the Christians and the tolerance of the magistrates, who allowed the faithful to attend their imprisoned brethren day and night.

³ Tertullian, *ibid.* 4, and Fleury, *Hist. écl.* vi. 32. Tertullian relates (*De Cor. Mil.* i.) that on one occasion, when by order of the Emperor largesses were distributed in camp to the soldiers, who according to custom came to receive them wearing a laurel-wreath on their heads, one presented himself holding his wreath in his hand. At first his comrades pointed at him, then ridiculed him, and finally grew indignant. The clamor reaches the tribune. "Why do you not do as the others?" said he to the soldier. "I cannot," he answered; "I am a Christian." It was a breach of discipline and a refusal of obedience. The soldier was sent to prison. "He there awaits," says Tertullian, "Christ's largess" (*donaticum Christi*). Had the persecution been violent, this heroic bravado would have been immediately punished by a military execution. Notice that the Christians of Carthage blamed the soldier, but that Tertullian commends him, and proposes him as a model.

Bithynia who appeared to him too ready to employ the sword.¹ very probably against the Christians. The recall of a governor was an extreme and unusual measure: in this case the act was the more significant, as Antipater had been one of the Emperor's ministers. Unfortunately, Severus could not see or hear everything; and the law, defied by Christians eager for martyrdom, or too scrupulously obeyed by heartless magistrates, sent to execution men whose only crime was that they worshipped God in a different way from their persecutors.

It is a Jewish reply to the maledictions of Christians: "You hate us for having condemned Jesus? What would become of you if we had not condemned him?" We might also repeat the words of Tertullian, and say: "Would the Christian soil have been so fruitful if the blood of the martyrs had not watered it?" Two verities which by no means efface the stain imprinted by the death of the just, or rather, which show the sad necessities imposed on man by evil institutions. In Judaea, public authority and religious power were in the same hands.² Pagan Rome also suffered from their union, the Middle Ages from their rivalry: in one case, there were cruel persecutions; in the other, sanguinary wars,—everywhere and always death sown broadcast in the name of Him who made life. At no one of these epochs did men know liberty of conscience, which separates Church and State without arming the one against the other. Blessed be they who have given it unto us!

¹ . . . δόξας δὲ ἐτομότερον χρῆσθαι τῷ ξίφει τὴν ἀρχὴν παρελάιθη (Philost., *Vit. Soph.* ii. 24).

² According to Leviticus (xxiv. 16), the blasphemer is stoned, and all the people take part in his execution. This is harsher than the *crimen majestatis* of the Romans.

* Roller, pl. xlivi. No. 3.



THE GOOD SHEPHERD DIVIDING THE SHEEP FROM THE GOATS.³

CHAPTER XII.

CARACALLA, MACRINUS, AND ELAGABALUS (211-222 A.D.).

I.—CARACALLA (FEB. 2, 211—APRIL 8, 217); RIGHT OF CITIZENSHIP ACCORDED TO ALL THE INHABITANTS OF THE EMPIRE.

SEVERUS has long occupied our attention, and it is with good reason that we have thus minutely studied the history of his reign. We shall pass rapidly over his successors until we again find rulers and events worthy to detain us.



PHILADELPHIA.¹

The father of Caracalla had done everything to maintain fraternal affection between his sons. He recommended it to them by wise counsels and by his own good example; and furthermore, he urged the Senate and the people to remind the young princes repeatedly of the necessity of it. Each year there was celebrated throughout the Empire "the festival of brotherly love," *philadelphia*;² the Senate by solemn sacrifices besought the gods to maintain it;³ and Severus caused medals to be struck, representing his two sons about to clasp hands, with these words as legend: *Perpetua concordia*.⁴ It is said that during his last illness he sent to them the discourse which Sallust places in the mouth of the dying Mincipsa, exhort-



CONCORDIA AUGUSTORUM.⁵

¹ Coin of Perinthus struck under Septimius Severus, with the legend, ΦΙΛΑΔΕΛΦΕΙΑ ΗΕΡΙΝΘΟΙΩΝ ΝΕΟΚΟΡΩΝ, around the urn of Games placed upon a table and bearing the word: ΗΙΒΩΙΑ, the Pythian games. Large bronze.

² Especially in the Hellenic East. Eckhel, vii. 231; Mionnet, vol. iv. p. 128, No. 179. M. Dumont (*Éphébie attique*, i. 299) thinks that the Φιλαδέλφεια were constituted for Marcus Aurelius and Verus, perhaps even earlier.

³ Dion, lxxvii. 1.

⁴ Eckhel, vii. 231. A bronze of Severus has also for a legend: *Concordia Augustorum*; another of Geta bears: *Concordiae aeternae*; this was the official mark.

⁵ Caracalla and Geta sacrificing on a tripod. Bronze coin of Geta.

ing his sons to union. The truth is that the Emperor himself, and all the world with him, were aware of the mistake he had committed in styling them both *Augusti*, when one had not over

CARACALLA IN YOUTH.¹

the other the ascendancy of age and authority that Marcus Aurelius had had over Verus. These equal rights, granted² to young men hardly past the age of boyhood,³ promised the Empire a tragedy; it

¹ Bust of the Campana Museum, found in the ruins of the Circus Maximus (Henry d'Escamps, *op. cit.* No. 105).

² Except that of Pontifex Maximus, which was not divisible. Moreover, from the first, Caracalla conducted himself as if he alone had the authority (Dion, lxxvii. 1), and Geta had scarcely more than the imperial honors.

³ Caracalla, born April 4, 188, had not yet completed his twenty-third year; Geta, born May 27, 189, was only twenty-two. The name *Caracalla*, or *Caracallus* (Dion, lxxviii. 3), came to him from a Gallie garment, the *caracalla*, a sort of tunie with a hood, distributed by him among the common people of Rome and his own soldiers, and later adopted by the

occurred after a few months. Herodian shows them at Rome dividing between them the soldiers and the palace; making of the latter two strongholds in which they fortify themselves against

each other, and finally proposing to divide the Empire: Asia to Geta, the rest to his brother, —each with half of the Senate, of the armies, and of the fleets. “But will you also divide your mother?” Julia said to them. Dion makes no mention of such a project, the announcement of which would have produced in Rome, where our historian was at that time, a profound sensation. The idea of establishing two Roman empires could not have occurred to the statesmen of that time; but it is curious that it should have originated in the head of a rhetorician,



GETA, CLOTHED IN THE PALUDAMENTUM.¹

orician, who, not finding the history of the family of Severus sensational enough utilized all the processes of the schools to render it suitably dramatic.

Caracalla made use of more simple means. Enticing his brother

hermits of the Thebaid as their costume. His real name was Bassianus. Severus substituted for it that of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, which the coins and the inscriptions of monuments give him. He was appointed Caesar in 196, pontiff in 197, Augustus in 198, consul, at sixteen, in 202. In the inscriptions his name is usually written *Aurellius*. Cf. *C. I. L.* iii. 1,114.

¹ Museum of the Louvre. Bust of corallite marble found at Gabii in a perfect state of preservation. The busts of Geta are very rare, Caracalla having commanded that the statues of his brother should be destroyed (*Monum. Gab.* No. 4, and *Clarac*, No. 97).

into Julia's apartment, under pretext of a reconciliation, he slew him in the arms of their mother, who was covered with blood and herself wounded; he then hastened to the camp of the praetorians to secure an asylum by purchasing that venal band. He told them he had just escaped death through the protection of his gods, and a large sum of money paid them the price of blood.

Since it was the custom to represent the victim as a would-be assassin, Geta was declared a public enemy, and his name was effaced from all the monuments, even from the Arch of Septimius Severus, on which traces of it are yet to be seen. It was a crime to mention his name, even in the comedies,—where it had been customary that it should be borne by a slave,—and even in wills. If a legacy had been made to an old servant so named, the dead man himself indeed escaped Caracalla's wrath, but his fortune was confiscated.

Dion tells of the terrible dreams in which Geta appeared to the fraticide, threatening, with sword in hand; also in which he hears his father cry out to him: "I will kill thee as thou hast killed thy brother!" But as Caracalla consecrated in the temple of Serapis the sword which had served him for the accomplishment of the crime, we have reason to think that he carried the remembrance of it very lightly (February, 212).¹

To the Senate, Caracalla justified himself by citing the example of Romulus, and no one took the pains to contradict the old legend. At the end of his speech the young Emperor declared that he recalled all those in exile. It was a promise of clemency; but on the morrow the friends of Geta perished in great numbers.² The soldiers were let loose; in slaying they found pleasure and profit, for they pillaged the houses of the condemned and even of other



THE ARCH OF SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS.

¹ The apotheosis of Geta, which Caracalla is said to have had pronounced, has been imagined to furnish occasion for a play upon words: *sit divisor non sit viris* (*Spart., Geta*, 2). No document taken from inscriptions or coins justifies the assertion of Spartianus. Cf. Eckhel, vii. 234. The interpretation given by Mommsen of inscription No. 1,464 of the *C. I. L.* vol. iii. does not seem well founded.

² Dion (lxxvii. 4) goes so far as to speak of twenty thousand Caesarians and soldiers, partisans of Geta, murdered in the palace.

persons. From the house of Cilo, formerly prefect of Rome, whom Caracalla styled his father, and whom he saved from their hands, they carried off gold, silver-plate, clothing, and furniture. Availing themselves of the terror which they inspired, they took ransoms, and exacted payment for sparing the innocent. They killed in behalf of the Emperor, and also on their own account. It appears that Caracalla abandoned to them the praetorian prefects. One of these was Papinian, whom an ancient writer calls "the asylum of law and the treasury of juristic wisdom,"¹ and whom Cujas regarded



BRONZE OF
CARACALLA.³

as "the greatest jurisconsult who has ever been or who ever will be."² It is said that Papinian had enraged the Emperor by refusing to dishonor himself, as Seneca had done under Nero, by an apology for the murder. If the story is true,—and there are reasons for admitting it,—it was a noble death; the great jurisconsult was himself a martyr to duty.⁴ His son and the son of Pertinax, a grandson of Marcus Aurelius, a daughter of that Emperor, who had dared to lament the death of Geta, a nephew of Severus, a Thracea, and many others met the same fate. Dion made the list of the senatorial victims; it has been lost, but we know that it was long: the first crime necessarily involved many others.

With this Emperor, of base and wicked nature, "who," says a contemporary, "never loved any one,"⁵ the reign of Commodus was repeated: the same orgies at the palace, the same massacres of men and wild beasts at the circus, the same insults to the Senate, the same exactions under myriad forms. It is probable that, like so many other Emperors who came into power young, he had intermittent attacks of insanity.

We know, in fact, that Caracalla was diseased in mind as well

¹ Spart., *Ser.* 21.

² *In prooemio ad Quæst. Papin.*

³ Aesculapius and Telesphorus, upon a medium bronze of Caracalla. (PM. TR. P. XVIII COS. IIII PP. SC.)

⁴ Spartanus (*Car.* 8) and Aur. Victor (*Dc. Caes.* xx.) reject this story, saying that it was not among the duties of the praetorian prefect to compose a discourse for the Emperor. Doubtless; but Papinian was a relative of the imperial family, and, besides, enjoyed a high reputation: the apology which Caracalla demanded of him would certainly have produced a great effect in the interest of the murderer.

⁵ Dion, lxxvii. 11.

as in body; the many coins of his which are in existence, with the image of "the healing gods," attest his efforts to rid himself of some secret malady.¹ He loved to cause fear, and studied to give himself a fierce air, which his busts have preserved: men flattered him most when they trembled before him. A man of consular rank having said to him that he seemed at all times

CARACALLA.²

to be in a rage, he took it for a compliment, and sent him a million sesterces.³ In the Senate he was always praising Sylla, so harsh towards the Conscript Fathers of the Republic, or extolling his own compatriot Hannibal, so terrible to Rome.⁴ And he did indeed give them cause to tremble, for he organized a

¹ Dion, lxxvii. 15; Eckhel, vii. 212 *et seq.*² Bust of the Museum of Naples.³ Dion, lxxvii. 11.⁴ Herod. iv. 14.

vast system of espionage, by means of the soldiers who were employed in keeping order in the city. Through fear lest some officer by inopportune severity might discourage their zeal, he reserved to himself the cognizance of complaints preferred against them, and a decision as to the disciplinary penalties which they might incur. He protected these men of whom he had made eyes to see and ears to hear, even when there was nothing either to be seen or to be heard.¹ Accordingly, every one was at the mercy of these agents of low degree, who were assured of impunity, and whose denunciation cost fortune or life.

When he did not take life or property by sentence of death or of confiscation, he ruined by capricious exactions. "He placed us under contribution," relates Dion, "for the provisions which he distributed to the soldiers or sold to them like a tavern-keeper. When he left Rome we had to prepare for him, at our expense, sumptuous lodgings along the route, even for the shortest journeys, and sometimes in places where he was not to pass.

In the cities where it was supposed he would remain some time, it was circuses and amphitheatres that we were obliged to construct. In all this he had but one purpose,—to ruin us; he often repeated: 'No one but myself ought to have money, so that I may give it all to my soldiers.' He was accustomed to notify us that at daybreak he would administer justice or attend to public affairs, and then keep us waiting until after mid-day, sometimes even until night, without so much as receiving us under his vestibule." And while the *illustriſſimi* awaited a look, a word from the master, he was driving in chariot-races, fighting with gladiators, drinking to excess, or mixing wine in bowls to send out to the soldiers of his guard in full cups, which the senators, parched with thirst and the heat of the sun, could not detain on their passage.³ "Sometimes," adds Dion, "he administered justice;" and Philostratus reproduces one of these audiences,

¹ Dion, lxxvii. 17.

² The Circus Maximus, on a large bronze of Caracalla. (SPQR. OPTIMO PRINCIPI SC.)

³ *Id., ibid.*



LARGE BRONZE OF
CARACALLA.²

which assuredly lacks gravity, but at which the Emperor, this time, at least, did not lack good sense.¹

This profligate wished, like Domitian, to assume the character of an austere reformer. He punished adultery with death, although the law did not exact this severity; and he caused four vestal virgins to be buried alive, asserting that they had violated their vow. One of them, whom he himself had attempted to seduce, cried out on her way to punishment: "Caesar well knows that I am still a virgin."²

This time tyranny was not of profit to the provinces; they had to suffer exactions of every kind,—in the form of "voluntary gifts," new taxes, old ones augmented, perhaps the coinage of base money to pay the Emperor's debts.³ Caracalla doubled the fees for manumissions, legacies, and donations, abolished inheritances *ab intestato* and the immunities granted in these cases to near relatives of the deceased; and finally, he declared all the inhabitants of the Empire citizens.⁴ Some have seen in this rescript a great measure of equity, or at any rate the completion of the revolution begun by Caesar; but in reality it was a fiscal expedient. The *peregrini* continued to pay their former contributions, and they were henceforth subject to the tributes which the *cives* had been accustomed to pay in the place of the land-tax and

¹ *Vitae Soph.* ii. 30. The Sophist Philiscus claimed, by virtue of being a professor in the University of Athens, *vacationem a publicis muneribus*. Caracalla terminated the discussion by saying, as was just: *Nolim ob breves atque miseras oratinnellas civitates privare munera praestituris, τῶν λειτουργούσοντων*. But another day he did the contrary, granting the *vacatio munorum* to Philostratus of Lemnos for a declamation. (*Ibid.*)

² Dion, who reports these words, yet supposes her guilty (lxxvii. 16).

³ There certainly were great monetary changes under Caracalla. We know that he reduced the *aureus* from $\frac{4}{5}$ to $\frac{1}{5}$ of the pound of gold, making it only equal in intrinsic value to 22.56 silver denarii, instead of to 25.08, as hitherto, and that he first issued in enormous quantities the *argenteus Antoninianus*,—debased coin: that is, copper with a mixture of silver. The *Antoninianus*, which with its normal weight of silver should have been worth more than the denarius,—about 21½ cts.,—soon came to be only silvered copper. This adulteration doubtless began under Caracalla, for Dion (*ibid.* 14) formally accuses this Emperor of having issued coins of silvered lead and gilded copper: several medals, which give to Alexander Severus the title of *restitutor monetarum*, indicate a reform which justifies the statement of Dion. There is, besides, in the collection of Vienna, a plated *aureus* of Caracalla (Eckhel, i. 115). The obligation to pay the taxes in gold also dates probably from this time; at least, it appears established under Elagabalus (Hist. Aug., *Alex.* 38). The $\frac{1}{2}$ upon enfranchisement had moreover always been paid in this manner, *aurum vicesimarium* (Livy, xxvii. 10).

⁴ *In orbe Romano qui sunt, ex const. imp. Antonin. cives romani effecti sunt* (Ulpian, in the *Digest*, i. 5, 17; *Novell. Justin.* lxxviii. 5).

the capitation.¹ This reform, which extended to all the provinces the benefit of the Roman laws, and consequently the right of appeal to the Emperor, did not affect the former distinctions,—as free and federated cities, Latin colonies, and those with the *jus Italicum*, etc., which subsisted long after. Caracalla himself made new ones, granting the *jus Italicum* to the inhabitants of Antioch and Emesa.² One of these long-existing distinctions was however effaced: he admitted Alexandrians into the Roman Senate, which had up to that time been closed against them.

Neither was the status of the individual modified by this measure. The condition of the slave, the colonist, the freedman, the foreigner established in the Empire or enrolled in its auxiliary troops, remained the same;³ there were merely additional imposts and a new class of *peregrini*. But a long list of citizens gained an advantage by the decree of Caracalla. The custom of gratuitous distributions was extended to all the cities possessing the right of Roman citizenship. They made it a point of honor to imitate the charitable institution of the metropolis, and we find, even in Palmyra, which became an Italic colony, tesserae for the distribution of grain.⁴ When all the inhabitants of the Empire were citizens, the poor of the provincial cities participated also in the benefit of the public aid. Saint Augustine sees only this result of the edict, and it seems to him a very happy one. "This was," says he, "an excellent and very humane measure, for it enabled the common people, destitute of land, to obtain supplies furnished by the common fund."⁵ When Maximin took possession of the municipal

¹ That is to say, one twentieth of the manumissions, legacies, and donations (*Dion*, lxxix. 9, and this work, Vol. IV. pp. 101 and 159). Nor had the provincials been subjected to the provisions of the laws concerning inheritances; he took away the *caduea* from the public treasury, *aerarium*, to assign them to the *fiscus*, or treasury of the Emperor: *O nia caduca fisco vindicantur, servato jure antiquo liberis et parentibus* (*Ulpian*, *Reg.* xvii. 2).

² *Digest*, I. 15.

³ Diocletian gave later, in 298, the right of citizenship to sons of veterans born of foreign mothers, *peregrini juris feminas* (*C. I. L.* iii. 900). The *dediticii*, the Junian Latins, those whom a legal sentence deprived of the right of citizenship, foreigners established, willingly or by compulsion, in the Empire or serving in its troops, perhaps the inhabitants of countries united to the Empire after Caracalla, these formed a new class of *peregrini*, placed between the *cives* and the *barbari*. Cf. Accarias, *Précis de droit romain*, i. 94.

⁴ See Vol. VI. pp. 114 and 519 the proof of the extension of this custom.

⁵ . . . *Gratissimum atque humanissimum factum est, ut . . . plebs illa, quae suos agros non haberet, de publico riveret* (*De Civit. Dei*, v. 17).

funds, it is noticed that he seized even the money that served to pay for the distributions of grain.¹

Some of the jurisconsults who wrote, "Food must be given to the poor," doubtless foresaw that the decree would have this merit; but not so Caracalla,—though, like his father, he was very liberal in the distribution of provisions. The determining motive for him was the fiscal reason; for his need of money was extreme. The immense treasure left by Severus had been quickly dissipated. "There is nothing more left," the prudent Julia said to him as she vainly attempted to control these prodigalities; "fairly or unfairly, all our revenues are exhausted."

"Courage, mother; while we have this, money shall not be lacking:" as he spoke, he laid his hand upon his sword.

His own was not to be greatly feared, but he had the swords of his soldiers. Severus had held the troops in restraint; his son gave them loose rein, acting upon the maxim attributed to his father: "Make the soldiers content, and laugh at the rest." His innumerable victims had left behind them relatives and friends who might avenge them. All, therefore, were enemies, except those to whom he said: "It is for you that I reign; my treasures are yours." And they might well believe it, seeing themselves daily gorged with gold. Their yearly pay was increased seventy millions of drachmas,³ which the ordinary revenues of the state were no longer sufficient to pay. He adopted another measure, disastrous



CAMEO OF CARACALLA.²

¹ Herod., vii. 3.

² Caracalla crowned with laurel and wearing the aegis. Cameo No. 251 of the *Cabinet de France*. Sardonyx of three layers, 48 mill. by 38. Portrait bearing very slight resemblance.

³ Dion, lxxviii. 36; cf. lxxvii. 24, where the figures for the augmentation of the ἀθλα τῆς στρατείας are probably inverted.

to discipline. The legions had been accustomed to live in camp the whole year under tents; he allowed them to take up their winter quarters in the neighboring cities,¹ which they treated as conquered territory, ruining their hosts, and themselves losing, in a life of debauchery, what military virtues remained to them.

There is one thing which the mere mercenary, the soldier without a country, such as the Roman soldier had now become, loves as

GOLD MEDAL.²

well as he loves gold; namely, war,—that intoxicating game of life and death in which he always hopes to win: the license of an army on a campaign delights him, and the glutting of brutal passions, disguised by a show of glory. Caracalla had promised to lead his soldiers to this chase of men and booty. “I wish to die in war,” he said; “it is a noble death;”³ and he had continually on his lips a name which the Greeks had long placed above the most famous names of Rome,—that of Alexander. In the time of Polybius, his compatriots were wont to avenge themselves for their recent defeat by saying to the Romans: “It is to Fortune that you owe your successes; Alexander owed his to his genius.” Later, they again repeated:

“The Parthians, whom you have been unable to vanquish, were but

the least of the peoples subjugated by him.”

MEDAL OF ALEXANDER.⁵

Accordingly the remembrance of the hero of the Hellenic race had haunted the minds of Caesar and of Trajan. These great captains desired to follow in the track of Alexander, to establish their legionaries in the cities built by his veterans on the banks of the Oxus, feeling that they should make the Roman Empire complete only when they gave it for its Eastern limit the same which the empire of Alexander had had. But as the old spirit of Rome gave way before the advancing encroachments of Hellenism, the great Macedonian ceased to be a rival and became a fellow-citizen, whose fame now formed part of the

¹ lxxviii. 3.

² Alexander the Great; talismanic gold medal.

³ Dion, lxxvii. 3.

⁴ Talismanic silver medal with the name of Alexander, ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ.

⁵ Medal of Alexander on a sword-belt, and serving for a talisman (*Dic. des Antiq.* fig. 314).

SILVER MEDAL.⁴

national fame. He was raised to a place of honor, he came to be a god; and the formidable soldier was transformed into a beneficent genius who warded off disastrous influences, ἀλεξίκακος. Medals of gold and silver, stamped with his effigy, served as talismans. "They protect," says a writer of the *Augustan History*,¹ "in every act of their lives, the men who wear them." Severus assumed the name of Alexander. Caracalla did more,—he declared that the soul of the hero had passed into his own;² and to prove this, he trained war-elephants and organized a Macedonian phalanx.³ The latter creation, however, was less a passion for imitation than the completion of a reform begun long before. Instead of regular armies to be encountered with scientific tactics, the Romans now had to repulse the impetuous attacks of unorganized Barbarians and the fleet horsemen of Parthia. Before the elephants and the phalanx of Pyrrhus⁴ the Romans had abandoned their old order of battle in close ranks and dense columns. Their adversaries changing, they resumed it, so that individual impetuosity might dash against an impenetrable mass. This reform had begun during the wars in Britain;⁵ later, Arrian⁶ clearly lays down the principle of the formation in phalanx of eight men deep without interval, with a ninth line of archers, the cavalry and military engines being in the rear and on the wings, which was hereafter the order of battle of the legions.

Near the close of the year 212, Caracalla went to Gaul. He caused the governor of Gallia Narbonensis to be put to death, and disturbed these provinces by violating some municipal rights,—perhaps in case of those cities which refused the onerous gift of the *jus civitatis*. A serious malady, and doubtless also a desire to inspect the defences of the Rhine, detained him north of the Alps. In February, 213, he was again in his capital,⁷ which he now saw for the last time.

He had promised his soldiers expeditions, and the Empire had

¹ *Tyr. trig.* 14.

² Dion, lxxvii. 7–8. He was called φιλαλεξανδρότατος.

³ [Neither of which ever won a victory for Alexander.—ED.]

⁴ This change was before the time of Pyrrhus; but the new organization was consolidated and improved in this war. See, in our first volume (pp. 369 *et seq.*), the reforms of Camillus and the creation of the legion.

⁵ Under Paulinus and Agricola (*Tac.*, *Agric.* 35; *Dion*, Ixii. 8). ⁶ In 136, *Acies*, 15.

⁷ We have in the *Code* (vii. 16, 2) a rescript dated Rome, February 5, 213; but there may be an error in this date. Cf. Eckhel, vii. 210, 211.

need to strike some blow in the direction of the Danube and the Rhine, where powerful confederations were forming, which we shall mention later. One of these, that of the Alemanni,—who now appear for the first time in history,—surprised an entrance through the fortified line which covered the *agri Decumates*, and a large body of cavalry carried fire and sword into this outpost of Italy and Gaul. Before the end of 213¹ Caracalla led his troops against the invaders and vanquished them on the banks of the Mein, where their women repeated the acts of heroic ferocity which Plutarch attributes to the women of the Cimbri,—unless the story of Xiphilinus be a classical reminiscence. Other successes in the direction of Rhaetia are also mentioned. The Osrhoenian archers, who formed part of the Roman army, had the honor of the campaign,—which leads us to suppose that the enemy were neither very numerous nor very formidable.² However, the report of these victories resounded afar; peoples established at the mouths of the

Elbe and on the North Sea sent deputations to the Emperor to request his friendship and also subsidies, which he granted them.³ The Alemanni, rendered prudent by their defeat, remained quiet for twenty years. Dion accuses the Emperor of having

thus purchased peace from the Germans. We have repeatedly explained that it was good policy to win over the Barbarian chiefs by presents, in order to avoid sudden irruptions and the useless wars which they entailed. There is then no occasion to blame Caracalla for having pursued this course,—at least if he did not purchase peace too dearly.⁵ It enabled him to levy among the

¹ At least we possess coins of this year on which he bears the name of Germanicus (see above, and Eckhel, vii. 210, 222; cf. Or-Henzen, No. 5,507).

² These archers, unknown to the ancient legions, assumed daily more importance in the army, where a certain number of soldiers of this kind were necessary; for General de Reffye has demonstrated that an arrow still has good effect at 130 and 140 yards. It was not a weapon with which a battle might be won, but it was a missile very useful at certain moments of the engagement.

³ Dion, lxxvii. 14.

⁴ ANTONINVS PIVS AVG. GERM., around the head of Caracalla wreathed with laurel. On the reverse, Serapis standing, and the legend: P. M. TR. P. XXI COS. IIII PP. Coin of silver; Cohen, No. 143. For the name of Antoninus assumed by Caracalla, see above, p. 75, note 3.

⁵ Maerinus—his murderer, it is true—accuses him of having dispensed as much in pensions to the Barbarians as for the pay of the army; but this is absurd (Dion, lxxviii. 17).



CARACALLA GERMANICUS.⁴

Alemanni auxiliary corps, one of which formed his body-guard. We should even be reduced to praising his conduct towards the army, if we did not see in it an unworthy effort to gain popularity. He shared all the fatigues of his soldiers. If there were a ditch to be dug, a bridge to be built, any specially laborious work to be done, he was the first to set the example. He had the commonest food served up for him, and ate and drank from wooden bowls; he shared the coarse bread of the troops; frequently he ground his own wheat, made the loaf of bread, and placed it in the oven. He dressed like the poorest soldiers: hence they called him their comrade; and he was extremely proud of this. He rarely was carried in a litter, or rode on horseback; he marched fully armed, and sometimes carrying the ensigns laden with ornaments of gold, which were a heavy burden even to the most robust centurions.¹ Hadrian, marching with bare head in front of his legions, is still the commanding officer; Caracalla, preparing his own food, is merely grotesque, and destroys discipline by losing the respect of his soldiers.

Historians of the time further speak of Barbarians treacherously massacred, of a king of the Quadi whom the Emperor caused to be put to death, of a war which, following the wish of Tacitus, he kindled between the Vandals and the Marcomanni, of successes against the Sarmatians in Dacia, and against the Goths, whose name now appears for the first time.³ There is much obscurity

A TEMPEST.²

¹ Herod., iv. 7. Dion agrees with him.

² From the Vergil of the Vatican.

³ These were the advance-guard of the Gothic nation, which was at this time approaching from the Euxine, but had not yet arrived,—unless we ought to understand these Goths of Caracalla to be Getae who inhabited both shores of the Danube. Dion (lxvii. 6) gives this name to the unsubdued Dacians.

about all this, but it reveals an intention to protect the northern frontier of the Empire. "After having reorganized the army of the Danube," says Herodian, "he passed into Thrace, and there made numerous regulations for the cities," as he had already done in Gaul, and as he did later in Asia. What the regulations were, we have no knowledge; but the fact is to be noted, for, being doubtless conceived in a spirit contrary to local liberties, they must have hastened the hour when these liberties disappeared.

He crossed the Hellespont,—narrowly escaping shipwreck in a tempest,—and repaired to Pergamus, to obtain from Aesculapius the cure of the unknown malady from which he suffered. He submitted to all the prescriptions then in use for wonderful cures. A miracle in this case would have been of importance and of excellent profit; but it could not be effected by ordinary procedures: the Emperor was too conspicuous a patient. The god turned a deaf ear, and Caracalla was not healed.¹ At Troy he crowned the tomb of Achilles with flowers, and desired himself to have a Patroclus. His freedman Festus was chosen to play the

dangerous part of friend to the hero. The new Patroclus died a few days later,—which gave the Emperor an opportunity to repeat the funeral scenes described by Homer; and it is credibly asserted that Festus had been poisoned for the purpose.

Caracalla passed the winter of 214–215 at Nicomedea, where Dion, our principal guide at this point, was with him. The

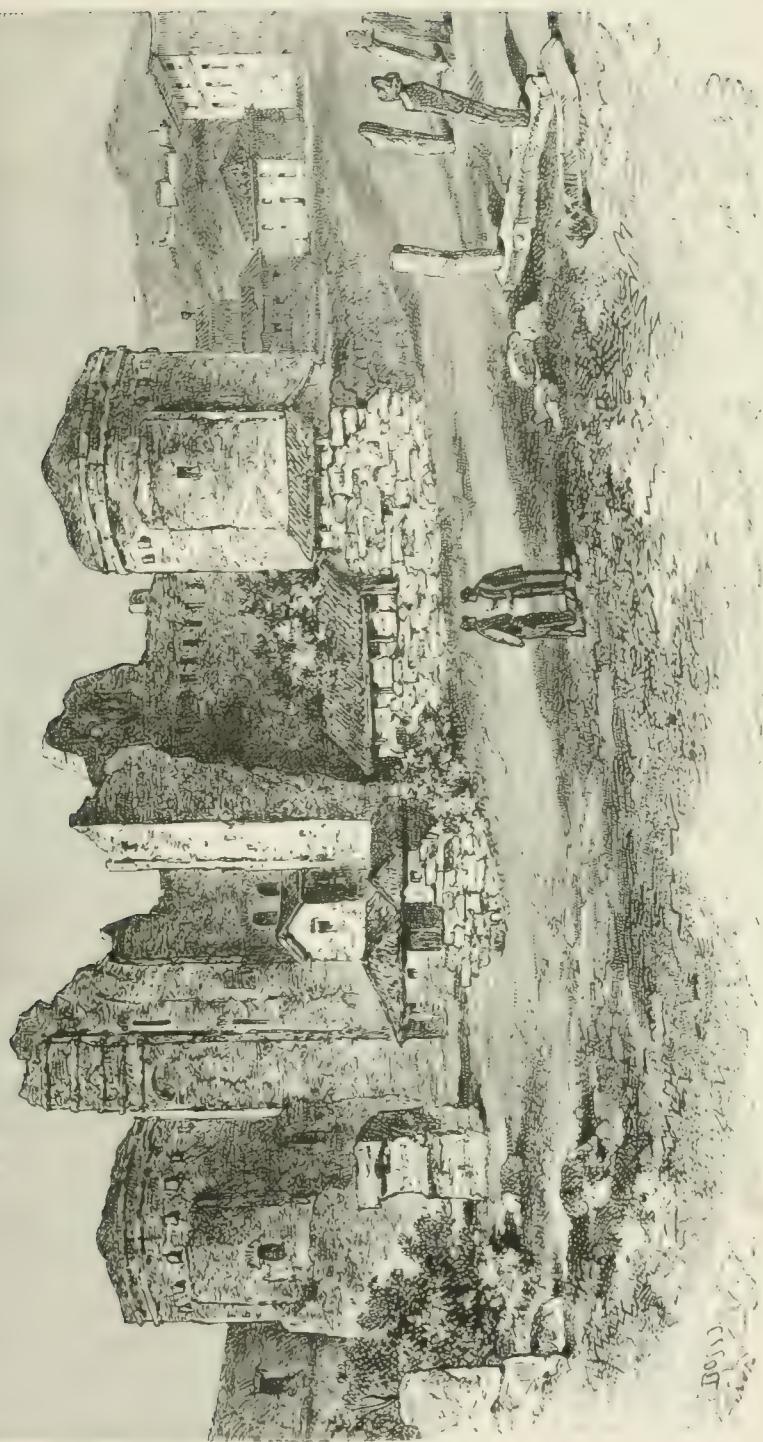
Parthians were at this time wasting in internal feuds the last remnant of their national life, and the occasion was propitious for attacking them. He arrogantly claimed from them two refugees, whom they immediately gave up; and this docility deprived him for the moment of all pretext for war. However, victories were necessary to him. The king of Osrhoene governed his country for the

¹ At this visit, Pergamus at least gained great privileges, which Maenius revoked. Texier finds in all Asia Minor the ruins of only two amphitheatres,—at Cyzicus and Pergamus (vol. ii. p. 227). The amphitheatre at Pergamus is very small, 184 by 121 feet. The waters of the stream which flows across it could be stopped for nautical games, crocodile combats, or nymphs playing on marine shells, as Martial indicates (*De Spectac.* 26).

² Coin of Pergamus, with the effigies of Aesculapius, Hygieia, and Telesphorus.



COIN OF PERGAMUS.²



RUINS OF THE BASILICA (?) OF PERGAMUS (TEXIER, ASIE MINEURE, VOL. II, PL. 117).

benefit of Rome. Edessa, its principal city, situated on the caravan-road, at the foot of a cliff which bore the acropolis, and from which issued an abundant supply of water, was and still is an important strategic point, the centre of defence for Upper Mesopotamia. It is possible, but not certain, that this king had entered into compromising relations with the Persians. Along that remote frontier friendships were fluctuating. Caracalla resolved to destroy this tributary state: he persuaded the king to come to him, cast him into prison, and made a Roman colony of his capital. The affair was insignificant, but the deposition of an Oriental king always occasioned more clamor than a like event in the West; moreover, Abgarus probably had a well-filled treasury.¹ Caracalla employed the same method of procedure with respect to the king of Armenia, then at variance with his son. He invited them to choose him as arbiter; and when they had come, he treated them as he had the king of Osrhoene. But the Armenians were not so easily captured as their monarch had been; they made a determined resistance, and destroyed a Roman army sent against them.

The senators, whom Caracalla reproached for their idleness, while he was exposing himself in their behalf to fatigues and dangers, naturally applauded these lofty exploits. The surname "Parthicus" was decreed to him, and the acclamations in his honor always ended by the wish that his reign might endure a hundred years. For all that, he still felt himself to be hated, and wrote to them from Antioch: "I know that my exploits are displeasing to you; but I have arms and soldiers, so I am not disturbed by what you think."

He had come to Antioch in search of pleasures;² in Alexandria, where he arrived at the end of the autumn of 215,³ he sought for vengeance. The Alexandrians — a frivolous and jeering race —

¹ This kingdom must have been re-established, for we afterwards find kings at Edessa. The deposed dynasties sometimes re-appeared in the high offices of Rome. A descendant of Herod was proconsul of Asia about 135, and a Julius Antiochus, of the royal race of Commagene, was consul and one of the Arval Brothers (*Bull. de corr. Hellén.*, 1882, p. 291). At the other extremity of the Empire, the country of the Gallaei and the Asturians was separated, in 215, from Hispania Citerior. This was merely a dismemberment of a province (*C. I. L.* vol. ii. No. 2,661).

² *Antiochenes colonos fecit salvis tributis* (*Digest.* l. 15, 8, sec. 5). He granted to them, as also to the Byzantines, *jura vetusta* (*Spart., Car.* 1).

³ Eckhel, iii. 215.

gave to Julia the surname of Jocasta, her son's incestuous spouse, the mother of two hostile brothers; they called Caracalla "the very great Getic" (*maximus Geticus*), — a cutting allusion to an exploit which had not been accomplished in the country of the Getae; and they laughed at this ugly man, undersized and bald, old before his time, who assumed to copy the great heroes, Achilles and Alexander. All this was reported to the Emperor. When he approached the

CARACALLA AS AN APPLE-SELLER.¹CARACALLA AS A WARRIOR.¹

city the most prominent citizens went forth to meet him, bearing in their hands the sacred objects, as if their gods wished to do honor to the new god who was coming. Caracalla received them well: he made them sit at his table; then, in contempt of the old and sacred laws of hospitality, at the termination of the feast ordered them to be put to death. During the execution his troops seized their arms and rushed into the city. The squares, the principal streets, the chief edifices, were quickly occupied by them; the Emperor himself took his station in the temple of Serapis, and thence directed the massacre. The slaughter continued

¹ Grotesque statuettes of the Museum of Avignon (Ch. Lenormant, *Nouveaux Mémoires*).

through many days, without distinction of age, condition, or sex. The number of the victims must have been immense, for Alexandria was an ant-hill of men, and also an opulent city, where the soldier struck at random and found pillage everywhere. The temples even, those sacred banks in which private persons often deposited their riches, were not spared. The carnage ceased only when, sated with blood and booty, the murderers dropped their swords.

In announcing this exploit to the Senate, "the Ausonian monster" said: "As to the quantity and quality of those who have perished, it matters little, for they all merited the same fate."¹ The public conscience was perhaps secretly indignant; but officially the senators commemorated this new species of victory by a coin representing the Emperor trampling Egypt under his feet.

Caracalla then resumed his schemes of conquest (216). He sent to ask from the Parthian king the hand of his daughter; and on his refusal, crossed the Tigris, captured Arbela, where he flung to the winds the ashes of the kings, and ravaged a part of Media. The enemy, taken by surprise, offered no resistance. After this easy success the Emperor returned to Mesopotamia and went into winter quarters in Edessa, there to consult the oracle of the god Lunus; but while seeking the future, he lost the present: on his way to Carrhae he was slain by one of those very men whose appetites he had pampered,—a soldier discontented because he had not been appointed centurion. The murder occurred April 8, 217, when Caracalla was barely twenty-nine years old.⁴

The Romans had divinities whom they called *Dirae*, "the

¹ Dion, lxxvii. 22, whom I follow always in preference to Herodian.

² PM. TR. P. XVIII IMP. III COS. IIII PP. SC. Caracalla trampling under foot a crocodile, symbol of Egypt, and receiving two ears of corn from the hands of Africa (Cohen, No. 474).

³ Coin commemorative of the victory of Caracalla over the Parthians (*Victoria Parthica Maxima*). *Aureus* struck in the year 217.

⁴ Zosimus does not believe that Caracalla was killed by Macrinus; "the author of his death," he says, "was never known." Herodian (iv. 12) gives us to understand that there was a conspiracy among the chiefs of the army, and Spartianus affirms it (*Carac.* 6).



COIN OF
CARACALLA.³



LARGE BRONZE OF
CARACALLA.²

Terrible Ones." — avenging powers which always exist for monarchs, since expiation surely follows great crimes, and finally overtakes either those who have committed them, or their posterity.

Julia Domna was then at Antioch. Up to Caracalla's last hour she had exercised supreme authority; but she had also endured supreme anguish. For a quarter of a century the Roman world had been at her feet; then, her husband being dead, one of her sons had been murdered by the other; and now the murderer had also fallen under the blows of an assassin, involving in his downfall the ruin of his house. Too proud to endure the condition of a subject under an adventurer whom her family had raised from nothing, and to become, after so much grandeur, the object of public pity, she resolved to escape from her distress like a Stoic of ancient days. Moreover, she suffered from a malady perhaps incurable; death was approaching her: she went to meet it, and allowed herself to die of starvation.²

Caracalla had constructed at Rome a portico on which were engraved the exploits of his father, and Baths which are, after the Colosseum, the grandest ruin in Rome, and one of the largest in the world.³ A colonnade, 4,750 feet in length, formed an inclosure, within which were gardens with trees, lawns, and flowers, and a stadium for gymnastic exercises, which Roman hygiene prescribed after the bath. The thermae themselves—an edifice 750 feet long by 500 in width—contained a theatre, halls for declamation or study, courts with porticos, museums, and libraries; finally, an immense reservoir, surrounded with sixteen hundred seats of sculp-

¹ Gem of the *Cabinet de France*, No. 2,033.

² According to Herodian (iv. 13) she killed herself through despair, or in obedience to a secret order.

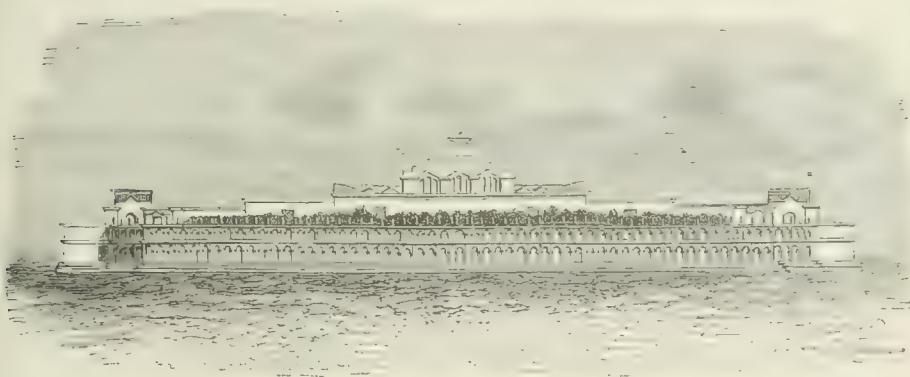
³ He had not time to complete these thermae: the external colonnade was constructed by Elagabalus, and completed by Alexander Severus (*Lampridius, Heliog.* 17, and *Alex.* 25). On the thermae of the Romans, see Vol. IV. p. 354



THE GOD LUNUS.¹

CARACALLA OFFERING TO MARS A VICTORY.¹

tured marble, where three thousand persons could bathe at once. In the centre of this colossal construction rose the *cella Solaris*, covered with a low dome.² Everywhere were the choicest

THERMAE OF CARACALLA.³

marbles, the most beautiful mosaics, and the masterpieces of art. From it have been taken the Hercules of Glyeon, the Flora, and the

¹ Gem of the *Cabinet de France*, No. 2,103 (agate, 20 mill. by 27). Caracalla seated, half nude, like Jupiter, holds in one hand a horn of plenty, and with the other presents a Victory to a statue of Mars. On the exergue: MAR(ti) VIC(tori). (Chabouillet, *op. cit.* p. 274.)

² [It has been shown by Mr. Middleton, in his *Ancient Rome* in 1885, that this roof was no arch, but a solid mass of concrete, cast in this shape, and laid on like a metal lid.—ED.]

³ Restoration by Blouet (*École des Beaux-Arts*).

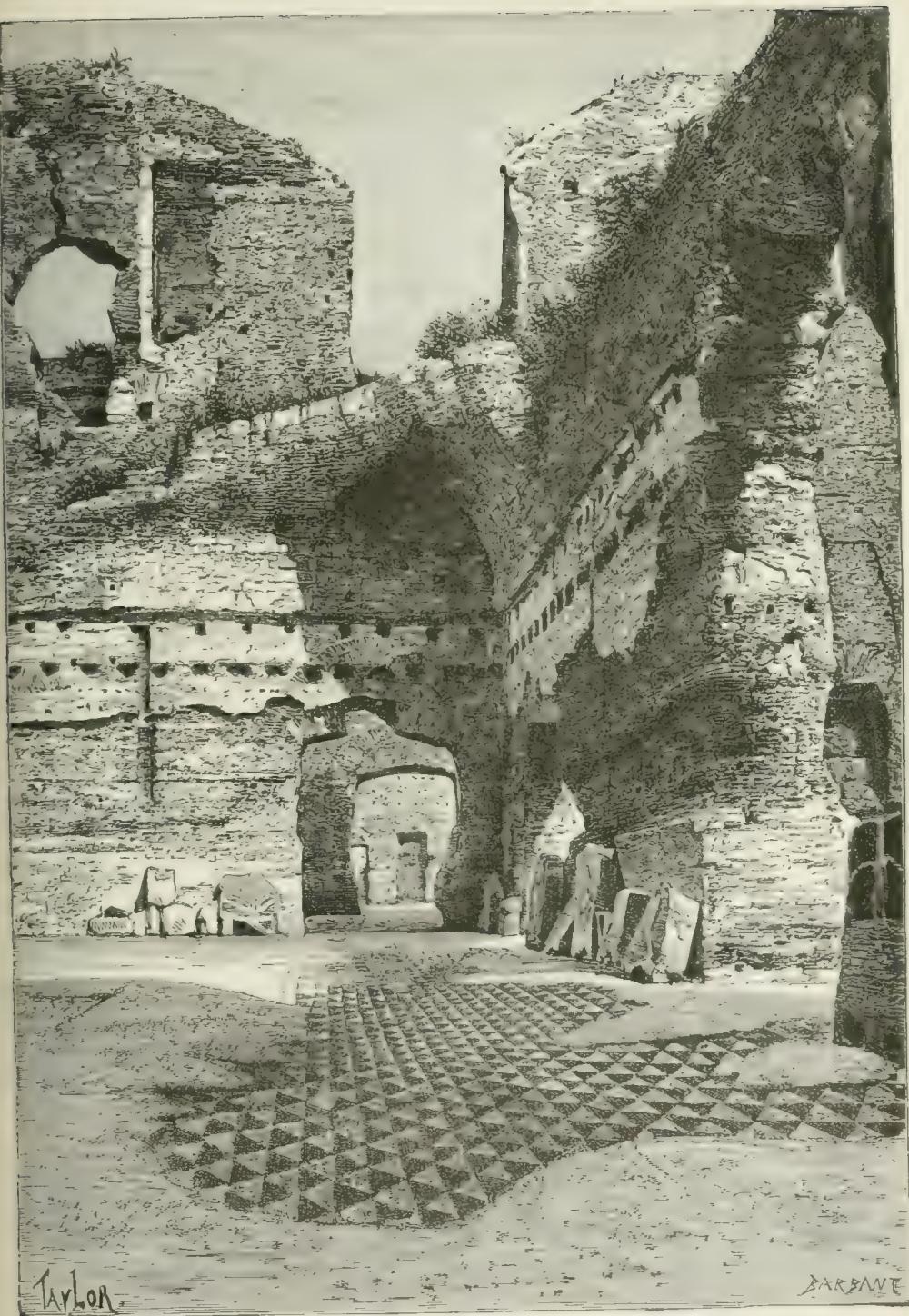
magnificent group of Dirce, known under the name of the Farnese Bull. A single column from these thermae made a sufficient decoration for the square *della Santa Trinità* at Florence, and the Museum of Naples is filled with sculptures brought from these



FRAGMENT OF MOSAIC FROM THE THERMAE OF CARACALLA (CASING OF THE
UPPER STORY).

ruins,—the last and supreme effort of Roman art. Spartianus remarks that the street leading to the Baths of Caracalla, which was also constructed by this Emperor, was the finest in Rome.

In Syria, he had continued the works begun by his father; at



INTERIOR OF A HALL OF THE THERMAE OF CARACALLA: PRESENT CONDITION.

Taylor

DARVANE

Baalbec, the great vestibule and the *temenos* of the temple of Jupiter were built by him.

These works of art will not, however, save his memory. He had scarcely reigned six years, and this short time had been sufficient to do irreparable damage. Under Commodus, Pertinax, and



FLORA, CALLED THE FLORA FARNESE.¹

Julianus, the soldiery had been insolent; under Caracalla the army actually took possession of the Empire. Accustomed to see this Emperor defer in everything to their caprices, they desired that this régime, which was so profitable to them, should endure; and to this end made choice of Emperors who would not be able to change it.

¹ Colossal statue found in the Thermae of Caracalla.

II.—MACRINUS (APRIL 12, 217—JUNE 8, 218); ELAGABALUS
(JUNE 8, 218—MARCH 11, 222).

MACRINUS (Marcus Opellius Macrinus) was an African, like Severus, and a native of Caesarea, the Cherchel of the French colony in Algiers. He was of humble origin. It was said that he had been a slave and a gladiator; we know that he was procurator of the property of Plautianus, and that he barely escaped perishing with him. Severus was favorably disposed towards this confidential agent of his old friend, making him superintendent of the post-service of the Flaminian Way. Caracalla, forgetting who had been his first protector, appointed him advocate of the treasury, and later, praetorian prefect. Macrinus was a mild and just man, without talent or ambition, who would never have dreamed of empire, had not a letter denouncing himself fallen into his hands.¹ To escape certain death, he caused the Emperor to be slain; and his accomplice having been instantly cut down by



DIADUMENIANUS ANTONINUS, CAESAR AND PRINCE OF THE YOUTH.³

becoming debased, even the imperial dignity. His son Diadumenianus, then in his ninth year, was made Caesar and Prince of the Youth (April 12, 217).⁴

¹ Capitolinus is very much opposed to him; but Dion, his contemporary, says too much in his favor out of hatred to Caracalla (lxxviii. 40). Herodian speaks also of his severity (v. 2).

² Herodian (v. 1) and Dion (lxxviii. 14). He had, however, received the consular ornaments (Dion, *ibid.* 13, which had assured him the title of *clarissimus* (Or-Henzen, No. 5512). Cf. Lampridius, *Alex.* 21.

³ M. OPEL. ANTONINVS DIADVMENIANVS CAES., around the head of the young prince. On the reverse, PRINC. JVVENTVTIS SC., Diadumenianus standing, holding an ensign and a sceptre. At his left, two ensigns.

⁴ Lampridius (*Diad.* 2) has preserved these words of Macrinus, showing that to the ordinary *donativum* were added promotions, which redoubled the interest that the soldiers

the guards, the part which Macrinus had played in the murder was not at first discovered. He affected great sorrow, which won the soldiers; on the fourth day he was proclaimed emperor, being as yet a mere knight.² Thus we see how everything is

Macrinus did not dare to have Caracalla declared a public enemy. The ashes of the late Emperor were borne secretly to the tomb of the Antonines; and that his images might disappear quietly, a decree sent to the mint all the statues of silver and gold. But he received divine honors. A temple and pontiffs were consecrated to him. The soldiers would not have suffered their favorite Emperor to be deprived of an apotheosis.

As the conqueror of Niger had assumed to continue the house of the Antonines, so Macrinus wished to attach himself to the African dynasty,—without, however, claiming all the inheritance. He took the name of Severus, and gave to Diadumenianus that of Antoninus, which Caracalla had borne. This was by way of flattery to the multitude,—always so easily captivated by words and appearances, to use an expression of Horace.¹ Macrinus now applied himself to gaining the general favor: that of the Senate by manifestations of respect; of the soldiers by money; of the people by the suppression of recent imposts. He also endeavored to satisfy the public conscience by the recall of the proscribed and the punishment of informers. But all this was done in a petty way, and nowhere was felt the firm hand of a man capable of imposing his will.

The king of the Parthians had invaded Mesopotamia with a large army. Macrinus, obliged to lead against him troops lacking in discipline, and without ardor for this war, met with repulses, which the enemy were not able, however, to turn into defeats. The Romans, masters of the cities and of numerous strongholds, in which they had had time to collect all the provisions, left the plain to the enemy's cavalry, who could not subsist there. The two monarchs soon wearied of a struggle in which neither of

had in multiplying the vacancies of the throne and the imperial adoptions: *Habute, comilitones, pro imperio ternos, pro Antonini nomine aureos quinos et solitas promotiones, sed geminatas.*

¹ . . . *Qui stupet in titulis et imaginibus* (*Sat.* I. vi. 17).

² CONSECRATIO. S. C. Caracalla in a four-horse chariot, on a funeral pile of three stories. (Large bronze struck after the death of Caracalla; Cohen, No. 396.)

³ PONTIF. MAX. TR. P. II COS. PP. S. C. Felicitas standing, holding a caduceus and a horn of plenty. (Large bronze; Cohen, No. 92.)



APOTHEOSIS OF
CARACALLA.²



REVERSE OF A COIN
OF MACRINUS.³

them was heartily engaged. Maerinus, besides, was in haste to return to Rome; he made humble proposals, released the prisoners, and gave fifteen million drachmas, with which Artabanus was satisfied.¹ He again humiliated himself before the Armenians, restored

DIADUMENIANUS.²

to their king Tiridates his mother, whom Caracalla had retained in captivity, the lands which the late king had possessed in Cappadocia, and probably gave him a pension, in consideration of which the Armenian agreed to receive a gold crown from Maerinus as a sign of the Emperor's suzerainty. In Dacia their hostages were

¹ Dion, lxxviii. 27.

² The cuirass and the cloak of this marble bust are of alabaster (Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 57).

also returned to the Barbarians. Under Caracalla, the Empire had maintained, at least in the face of the enemy, the proud attitude which Severus had given it.

The success of the Roman arms was not, however, the less celebrated on account of these events. The coins were like an official journal of the time, and quite as unreliable as certain bulletins of victories. One of them, which the Senate ordered to be struck, bore the words: *Victoria Parthica*.¹

Macrinus undertook, however, to draw closer the bonds of discipline, so lax under Caracalla; and while leaving to the veterans the increase of pay, the rewards and exemptions from service which had been lavished upon them, he attempted to subject the recruits to the regulations of Severus,² and treated them all with extreme severity. A victor might have done this with success; an Emperor who had been half-conquered, and had just been obliged to purchase a peace, was incapable of imposing this reform. The war had called many troops into Syria: he made the mistake of keeping

MACRINUS.³

¹ Eckhel, vii. 258.

² Dion, lxxviii. 28. According to Capitolinus (*Macr.* 12), he condemned adulterers to be burned (*junctis corporibus*), and fugitive slaves to fight as gladiators. Informers, if they failed to prove the accusation, forfeited their heads; if they proved it, they were branded with infamy, after having received the sum which the law allowed them. He condemned soldiers to the cross, or had other servile punishments inflicted upon them; and he often "decimated" them. I doubt whether he was capable of so much energy. Yet Herodian (v. 2) confirms the words of Capitolinus.

³ Heroic statue (in the Vatican) of Greek marble which has preserved its antique head (*Museo Pio Clem.* vol. iii. pl. 12).

them there. These inactive soldiers, their minds still full of the memories of the great expeditions of Severus, began to reckon up the profits that had accrued to them from the victories of the father and the largesses of the son, and to make, between what

MACRINUS.¹

was and what had been, that comparison which malecontents always turn to the disadvantage of the present. Macrinus had written to the Conspect Fathers that he intended to do nothing without them:² that is to say, that he proposed to give back to the Senate

¹ Bust of the Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 55.

² In the letter which Macrinus wrote to the Senate to announce the revolt of Elagabalus, he complained of the insatiable greed of the soldiers, and of the impossibility of providing, with the ordinary revenues of the state, for their pay at the rate to which Caracalla had raised it.

that central position in the Empire which the late Emperor had given to the army. It would have been wise for Macrinus to do this silently; especially important was it for him to send back to their respective garrisons the legions which were useless in the pacified East, and, above all things, not to pass his own time in Antioch gazing at dancers and listening to buffoons. Soon complaints were openly made in the camps of the parsimony of the new Emperor,—of this civilian who kept the soldier in his tent, while but lately cities had been his quarters. Men spoke of the millions given up to the Parthians as of property taken from the legions; and they finally came to believe that the real murderer of the Emperor who had been so dear to the army was no other than Macrinus.

After the death of Julia Domna, Macrinus had relegated to Emesa the sister of that Empress, Maesa, with her two daughters, Soaemias, mother of Avitus Bassianus (afterwards notorious under the name of Elagabalus), and Mamaea, whose son, born in an old Canaanite city, where the Venus of Libanus was adored,¹ had taken, from a temple of that city consecrated to Alexander, the name of the Macedonian hero. It seems that these Syrian women, who were very intelligent, had made advantageous marriages, by taking husbands who were both old and wealthy; at least, the two were already widows, and rich. They had also made skilful use of their imperial connections; and, in 217, what remained of the family of the priest Bassianus, three women and two children,² were now united near the Temple of the Sun. This sanctuary, in great veneration throughout all Syria, possessed the right of asylum;³ it afforded shelter for their wealth and their persons. Macrinus, a timorous usurper, lacking the audacity which sometimes renders usurpation successful, left in the hands of his enemies all this gold,—a sure means, in such a time, to bring about a revolution. Another imprudence was that of sending a legion into camp in the vicinity of this treasure, to which Maesa and her daughters had the key, and near a city which, owing to Caracalla



JULIA MAESA
(GOLD COIN).

¹ *Arca Caesarea* or *Cesarea Libanis*. Cf. Belley, *Mém. de l'Acad. des inscr.* xxxii. 685 *et seqq.*

² Soaemias had had a second son (Orelli, No. 946, and Boeckh, *C. I. G.* No. 6,627).

³ Lamprid., *Heliog.* 2.

the title and privileges of an Italic colony, venerated his memory and his race.¹

The three women, without counsellors, without support, undertook, in their remote Syrian city, to overthrow an Emperor; and they did overthrow him.

They had consecrated the elder of the boys to the priesthood of the god of Emesa,—an office hereditary in the family of Bassianus; they had caused him to be circumcised, for the purpose of conforming with the custom of the country, and had forbidden him to eat pork. They themselves also produced an effect on the minds of the people by devotion either feigned or sincere. An inscription gives to Maesa the title of “very holy;”² coins of Soaemias represent her in the character of the Venus Celestia;³ and Mamaea, through religious curiosity and political sagacity, had entered into correspondence with Origen.⁴ There were many Christians and Jews in this region whom these advances might win, without alarming the pagans. Then, as to-day, these sensuous and impressionable populations suffered themselves to be deceived by the outward appearance of sanctity. In the East

there have always been marabouts, who make use of religion for political ends. The three women assigned this part to the boy in whom were centred their affections and their hopes.

Varius Avitus Bassianus, better known under the name of his god Elagabalus,⁵ was then in his fourteenth year.⁶ He had that statuesque beauty which the Greeks regarded as a gift from the gods; and when, clad in a purple robe embroidered with gold, his head encircled with a crown of precious stones whose iridescence sparkled like a luminous aureole about his



ELAGABALUS, ON A COIN OF TRALLES.⁷

¹ *Digest*, I. 15, 1, sect. 4.

² *Sanctissima* (Henzen, No. 5,515).

³ Eckhel, vii. 265. See Vol. VI. p. 552, a statue of Soaemias, *Venus Celestia*.

⁴ Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* vi. 21. We must not in this fact see a leaning towards Christianity, for all the coins of Mamaea are pagan.

⁵ The name Elagabalus is never found on coins, any more than that of Caligula or Caracalla. These surnames have passed into history from the mouth of the people. His official name was Marcus Aurelius Antoninus.

⁶ Herod., v. 3. Lampridius assigns him three years more (and the same to Alexander Severus); but Dion represents him as being yet a child, *παιδίον* (lxxviii. 36 and 38), and makes him die at the age of eighteen (lxxxix. 20).

⁷ Large bronze, the reverse of which we have given in Vol. IV. p. 211.

brow, he went up to the temple to perform the sacred rites, the crowd believed they beheld a child of destiny. The soldiers encamped in the suburbs of the city, often came to this renowned sanctuary, and even more than others admired and loved the young priest, whom Severus had cradled upon his knees. Gradually the report spread that Elagabalus was more nearly connected with him who had been the real Emperor of the soldiers. Servants of the palace of Emesa asserted that he was the son of Caracalla;¹ and money distributed, promises made, and hopes held out, easily persuaded men who had an interest in being persuaded. For the success of this intrigue, Maesa sacrificed her gold, Soaemias her honor; but neither of them cared for what they lost. The gold of Maesa was placed at high interest, and Soaemias thought that the mantle of an empress would cover all.² As for the soldiers, they asked nothing better than to give to an effeminate Syrian the Empire of Augustus and Trajan.

One night Elagabalus repaired to the camp of Emesa, followed by wagons which bore the price of the Empire; and when day dawned he was proclaimed. They gave to him the names of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus (May 16, 218), — a last tribute to those famous Antonines whose renown was beginning to be magnified by remoteness, and whom the poets of the time ranked above the gods.³

A praetorian prefect, Ulpius Julianus, happened to be in the vicinity, with a troop of Moorish horsemen whom he believed to be devoted to Macrinus, their compatriot. He hastened to the camp to force its gates; the attack, feebly conducted, was not successful, and a second attempt met the same fate. So much was not needed to make the fidelity of his soldiers waver. When they heard a *cubicularius* of the late Emperor proclaim, in the name of the new, that the property and the rank of the dead man should belong to him who brought to the camp of Emesa the head of a centurion or a tribune; when they saw



THE GOD OF EMESA.

¹ He assumed this title, which is found in the inscriptions: *divi Severi nepos, divi Antonini filius.*

² Lampridius (*Heliog. 2*) accuses Soaemias of having led the life of a courtesan (*meretricis more vixit*).

³ . . . *Antoninos pluris fuisse quam deos* (Lamprid., *Diad. 7*).

their comrades display from the top of the wall the boy whom they called the son of Caracalla, together with the bags of Maesa's

ELAGABALUS.¹

gold, — they slew their officers, and the ensigns of the two armies were united.

On a first report of the prefect, Macrinus had seen in this revolt only an outbreak of women, which he could easily subdue.

¹ Bust of the Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 57.

Soon a messenger from the camp of Emesa arrived. "I bring you the head of Elagabalus," he said; and flung down that of Julianus. The sight of this bloody trophy which the rebels had sent him, the audacity of this soldier, who profited by the confusion to make his escape, caused anxiety in the Emperor's heart; and he had recourse to what seemed the great agent of safety with soldiers,—gold. To have an occasion for promising to each legionary five thousand drachmas, of which a thousand were paid on the spot, he conferred the title of Augustus on his son. The letter which announced to the Senate this elevation, promised the Romans a largess of 150 drachmas per head,—from which we see that a soldier was then esteemed to be worth thirty-three times as much as one of the sovereign people. He also re-established all the military regulations of Caracalla.

These largesses, inspired by fear, came too late; every day deserters made their way from all points of Syria, singly or in bands, to the camp of Emesa. The legion of Albano, which was encamped at Apameia, deserted in a body; so that the army of Elagabalus became strong enough to go in pursuit of that of Macrinus. The battle took place on the confines of Syria and Phoenicia; Gannys, the eunuch or servant of Mamaea, who led the soldiers of the young Caesar, was a skilful general. He took up a good position, and Maesa, Soaemias, and even Elagabalus, cast themselves into the fray to inspire their troops. Macrinus, on the contrary, frightened by the tumult and by new defections, fled, leaving his praetorians to maintain valiantly the reputation of the corps; but when they became aware of the cowardice of their chief, and received the promise of Elagabalus that they should preserve their rank and honors, they laid down their arms, and the high-priest of the Sun found himself master of the Roman world. This occurred June 8, 218.¹

Macrinus had sent in advance to Antioch an announcement of victory. When he arrived near that city, he took a certificate of the imperial post, cut off his hair and beard, and in disguise attempted in great haste to escape into Europe by way of

¹ Is it in remembrance of this victory that he founded in Palestine, on the site of Emmaüs, a city of victory, Nicopolis? (Eusebius, *Chron.*, ad ann. 224.) He made Emesa a colony possessing the *jus Italicum* (*Digest.*, l. 15, 8, sec. 6).

Byzantium. All went well at first, and he had crossed Asia Minor without opposition; when great fatigue and need of money obliged him to stop in a poor dwelling in the outskirts of Chalcedon. A note written by him to an agent of the imperial finances to obtain funds, led to his recognition; he was arrested, and delivered up to the soldiers of Elagabalus, who had followed him all the way from Antioch. Maerinus had charged trusty messengers to conduct his son to the Parthians, his recent allies.



RUINS OF ZANA, THE ANCIENT DIANA.¹

Horsemen overtook the child before he had crossed the Euphrates, and slew him. The news of his death reached his father while he himself was being brought to the conqueror. He threw himself down from his chariot and fractured his shoulder, and the soldiers at once murdered him. He was fifty-four years old, and had not reigned fourteen months.

No monument built by him is known; but an arch of triumph still standing in French Algeria, at Zana, the ancient Diana, was erected in his honor by his compatriots of Mauretania.²

¹ *Revue archéol.*, ninth volume.

² The inscription of the Arch of Zana (*Diana Veteranorum*), constructed directly after his accession, terms him *consul designatus*. Dion, in fact, informs us that Maerinus was not

He had in view, it is said, a revision of the imperial rescripts (which were most frequently only decisions in special cases), with the design of preserving those which were of a general character. It was a laudable intention, but required time for its execution; and this was not granted him.¹



THE GOD OF
EMESA.²

The god of Emesa was represented by a black stone, which no doubt had the same origin as the black stone of Mecca. The terrestrial influence of these two aerolites³ was very different; for we may say that the one brought down from sidereal space a grand idea of religious purity, and the other, the principle of all disorder. The Arabs relate that when creation was complete, God summoned the angels to contemplate the work emanating from his hands. At sight of it the choir of celestial spirits uttered a cry of adoration: "Allah!" This holy word, proclaiming the unity and omnipotence of the Creator, God wrote in the heart of the black stone which Abraham deposited in the Kaaba. At the day of judgment it will open, to disclose to view the divine formula in flaming characters, and to give testimony in behalf of those who have approached it with pure lips and a repentant heart.

This legend is beautiful and grand; it transforms an act of vulgar superstition into a profession of moral and religious faith. The stone of Emesa had more of worldly grandeur, but infinitely less of

willing, as Plautianus had done (see Vol. VI. p. 82), to reckon the consular ornaments which he had obtained from Caracalla as a first consulship (L. Renier, *Mél. d'épigr.* pp. 185 *et seq.*).

¹ He had also undertaken to continue the alimentary institutions established by Trajan and the Antonines (Lamprid., *Diad.* 2).

² Aureus of Uranius Antonius, bearing the black stone richly ornamented and surmounted by a crown with points.

³ "In the temple . . . is to be seen a great stone, rounded at the base and pointed at the top, of conical form and black in color, which they say fell from heaven" (Herod., v. 5).

⁴ Elagabalus in a chariot drawn by two women (cameo of the *Cabinet de France*, No. 253, white jasper, 27 mill. by 21). This monument answers to the text of Lampridius: *Junxit et quaternas mulieres pulcherrimas, et binas ad papillam, vel ternas et amplius, et sic rectatus est: sed plerumque nudus quam illum nudae traherent.* The Greek inscription, *Long live Epiphenus* (from *ἐπίγενος*, intruder), leads us to think that this cameo is a monument of a satirical nature.



ELAGABALUS.⁴

virtue. It was the image of the Sun, from which it appeared to have come; and as in all religions the sign is easily confounded with the thing signified, it was venerated like the Sun itself, the author of life, the principle of fecundity and generation, which its worshippers adored by acts analogous to those which it accomplishes in the bosom of Nature.¹

Elagabalus was the most complete representation of the unclean side of this naturalism. Hitherto the tyrants of Rome had at least had something of the Roman character. In the son of Severus there was still a soldier; but the son of Soaemias was purely a Syrian, in whom was united all that the East could produce of lust and shame. His inclinations turned to the most abominable vices, his mind to the wildest aberrations. Hence he has ever remained in the memory of men as the symbol of enthroned infamy. Three things had produced this moral monstrosity,—an impure religion, absolute power, and his own youth.

After his victory, Elagabalus assumed all the imperial titles, without awaiting the usual decree of the Senate, and marched rapidly upon Antioch, which purchased exemption from pillage by the payment of five hundred drachmas to each soldier. Thence were at once despatched letters to the Conscription Fathers,—in which he promised to govern like Marcus Aurelius,—and sentences of death against the governors who had been slow to divine his fortune, against senators who had shown too much zeal in favor of Macrinus, and even against the skilful man who had won for him the battle of Antioch.²

¹ Asia was full of these conical stones. Venus at Paphos, Gacion at Seleucia (see Vol. IV. p. 313) and at Bosra, were thus represented. These cones, of sidereal origin, symbolized the generative power; the two mountains named Casius, near Antioch and on the frontier of Egypt, owed this name to their pyramidal form (cf. Mionnet, *Séleucide et Priarie*, Nos. 891 *et seq.*, which give bronzes of Trajan representing a cone in a tetrastyle temple, with the legend, *Zeus Kasios*, and De Vogué, *Inscr. sémitiques*, pp. 103, 104).

² Dion, lxxix. 3, 4. One of the victims of Elagabalus, Valerianus Paetus, was condemned “because he had had images of himself made of gold, for the adornment of his mistresses.” I mention this fact to indicate a Roman usage: the first act of an Emperor was to coin gold pieces bearing his effigy. To encroach on this right was treason. Paetus was well aware of this, and doubtless was not as innocent as Dion says. “He was a Galatian,” adds the historian, “and was accused of seeking to incite a rebellion in the neighboring province, Cappadocia, and of having with this intent had the coins struck which were the cause of his death.” All usurpers began in this way. Amm. Marcellinus (xxvi. 7) relates that the partisans of the usurper Procopius brought about the defection of Illyria by putting in circulation in that province coins with his effigy, as proof that he was indeed the legitimate emperor.

Each one of the shocks which dethroned an Emperor had been succeeded by a period of disorder, shaking the Empire to its foundation, until a firm hand restored its equilibrium. The legions of Macrinus, sent to their camps, pillaged the villages along their route, and many men had visions of the imperial purple. They had just seen a mere knight come to imperial power, and now a boy had attained it. There were therefore no longer laws or ordinances, Senate or Roman people; no longer a powerful aristocracy giving to Rome its Caesars. "At the death of Nero," says Tacitus, "a terrible secret had been revealed; namely, that emperors might be made outside Rome." At the accession of Elagabalus, another secret was made known; namely, that it was not necessary to be the choice of a powerful army, but that a few cohorts and a little popular enthusiasm were sufficient to cause a revolution. Hence many men believed that with sufficient audacity it would be easy to force the gates of the palace. Two legates of legions, even a centurion's son, a worker in wool, and still others¹ attempted in various places to gain the support of the soldiers. A man whose name is unknown went so far as to instigate a mutiny among the crews of the fleet of Cyzicus, while Elagabalus was wintering near there in Nicomedea. "So many worthless men," says the historian Cassius, "had victoriously trodden the path to power that it had become smoothed for all the adventurers who dared enter upon it." The era of the thirty tyrants was approaching.

In Mount Taurus, Elagabalus had consecrated to his god the temple which Marcus Aurelius had erected in honor of Faustina, and Caracalla later had dedicated to his own divinity. At Nicomedea the new Emperor had himself painted in his sacerdotal costume. The picture was placed in the Senate at Rome, above the statue of Victory; and each senator was obliged, before taking his seat in the curia, to burn incense before it.² Elagabalus entered Rome wearing a purple robe embroidered with gold, a necklace of pearls, his cheeks painted with vermillion, and the brilliancy of his eyes heightened, like those of an Arab woman, by the use of henna. Maesa and her two daughters had accompanied him thither. United in devising the plot, these three women did not agree as to the advantages to be obtained from its success. Maesa, whose political

¹ Καὶ ἄλλοι δὲ πολλοί ἄλλοθι (Dion, lxxix. 7).

² Herod., v. 1.

ideas had been formed in the school of Severus, desired decency in conduct and order in expenditure,—unwelcome prudence, to which the boy, intoxicated with power, gave no heed. In the

opinion of Soaemias, on the contrary, Elagabalus, being master of all things, human and divine, had no need to restrain himself in anything. Between these two women a division of power was effected in accordance with the taste of each. Public affairs were irksome to the young Emperor, and he abandoned them to his prudent grandmother, on condition that she should not interfere with his pleasures, also giving her a seat in the Senate near the consuls. To his mother he gave the presidency of a senate of women,¹ intrusted with the duty of determining for the matrons their costumes and order of precedence, the quantity of gold and

STATUE OF VICTORY.²

precious stones that each might wear according to her condition. ornaments of litters and carriages, etc.,—a singular concern for etiquette in this court of parvenus, where the monarch made a display of all vices, broke down the barriers between all ranks, and set a charioteer of the circus above a consul! As to the mother

¹ Lamprid., *Hellog.* 4.

² Museum of the Louvre, No. 435. Statue of Greek marble, apparently celebrating two triumphs by the two crowns which she has, one upon her head, the other in her right hand. A trophy is under her feet.

of Alexander, she kept herself in retirement, and took especial care to withdraw her son from public notice.

The Emperor went on covering himself with infamy; but it should be noticed that although public morality was shamefully outraged, the state did not suffer greatly during this miserable reign.¹ The executions of the first few days, and the fidelity of the legions definitively obtained for the new government, rendered the ambitious prudent. Public agitation subsided; and since the Germans remained quiet, and the Parthians had enough to do to avert impending ruin, the cities of the frontier were at peace like those of the interior.

But at Rome what shame, what exhibitions! Gluttony which would have driven Vitellius to despair, lewdness such as to make Nero blush, scenes of infamy which can only be told in Latin! Elagabalus entered the city attired like a Phoenician priest or Median satrap, bringing with him his shapeless god, the black stone of Emesa, which he honored with barbaric songs, lascivious dances, and immolations of children.² He made it the supreme divinity of the Empire. All Olympus was obliged to humiliate itself before this intruder, whom he solemnly united in marriage with the Astarte of Carthage, giving for a bridal escort to

LARGE BRONZE.³

these deities the conquered gods,—those to whom for centuries the Romans had attributed their fortune, and who consequently had aided them in acquiring it! Jupiter Capitolinus was reduced to the position of courtier to the Syrian idol,⁴ and the pontifex maximus of Rome became the priest of the Sun-god.⁵

Every year, says Herodian, Elagabalus conducted his god into a new and magnificent temple which he had built for him in one of the suburbs of Rome. The stone was placed on a chariot sparkling

¹ . . . καὶ μηδὲν μέγα κακὸν ἡμῖν φέροντα (Dion, lxxix. 8).

² Lamprid., *Heliog.* 11.

³ Elagabalus, priest of the Sun-god (SACERD. DEI SOLIS ELAGAB. SC.).

⁴ *Omnis deos sui dei ministros esse aiebat* (Lamprid., *Heliog.* 7).

⁵ The conical stone of Elagabalus on a chariot drawn by four horses (SANCT. DEO SOLI ELAGABAL.). Imperial coin of Emesa; Mionnet.

⁶ *Sacerdos dei solis* (Eckhel, vii. 250); in the inscriptions, he joined to his title of Emperor that of priest of Elagabalus (Henzen, Nos. 5,514–15).

COIN OF EMESA.⁵

with gold and precious stones, drawn by six white horses; and that the idol might appear to drive the chariot himself, no person was seated in it. In front, the Emperor, supported by two guards, ran backwards, in order to keep his eyes ever fixed on the holy image. Behind were borne the statues of all the gods, the imperial ornaments, and the precious furnishings of the palace; the garrison of Rome and the entire populace formed the escort, bearing torches and strewing the way with flowers and wreaths.¹

Dion relates an adventure which took place about the same time near the province of which he was governor: "On the banks of the Ister appeared, I know not how, a genius who resembled in countenance Alexander of Macedon. He traversed Maesia and Thrace after the manner of Bacchus, accompanied by four hundred men armed with thyrsi and clad in goat-skins. They did no harm, and everything was supplied to them, lodging and provisions, at the expense of the cities; for no one dared oppose him in word or action, neither chief, nor soldier, nor procurator, nor governor of provinces: and in open daylight, as he had announced, he advanced in procession as far as Byzantium. Thence, crossing over into Chalcedon, he performed at night certain sacrifices, buried in the ground a wooden horse, and disappeared."²

That these populations, stupefied by gross superstitions, should take for a god the fanatic or the adroit swindler who lived at their expense, makes it easier to understand that other grotesque madman effecting a religious revolution at Rome in favor of his black stone. In the preceding chapter we have seen the noblest men of this age piercing in thought the depths of the sky, there to seek that God who ever keeps from view. The two facts which we have related above show the imagination of the weak-minded, whether princes or people, haunted by kindred visions. Genii, daemons, are everywhere; every religion furnishes them: and the multitude, not knowing which they should honor, pays a common and timorous adoration to them all. It is the popular syncretism, manifesting itself after its own fashion on a lower plane than the syncretism of the philosophers.

"In the temple of his god, where we have already seen all the occupants of the Graeco-Roman Pantheon, he placed also," says

¹ Herod., v. 5.

² Dion, lxxix. 18.

his biographer, “the image of the Great Goddess, the Vestal fire, the Palladium, and the sacred bucklers. He desired to have the rites of the Jews and the Samaritans observed there, and even the ceremonies of Christianity; so that the priests of Elagabalus might possess the secret of all religions.”¹

 This secret the Christians believed that they possessed; and seeing them oppose to this religious anarchy the unity of their belief and the discipline

of their churches, we feel that the hour of their triumph is coming. The just loathing inspired by the high-priest of Emesa must not, however, prevent us from recognizing that in the midst of these unclean festivals an important fact lay concealed. The worship of the black stone did not accord with the Roman genius, which the Greeks had rendered exacting in respect to the plastic representation of the gods; but the monotheistic idea which this stone represented became a very Roman one. The worship of the Sun assumes more and more importance; for it was of all the pagan cults the most rational. We shall see that the Sun was the great god of Aurelian and of the Constantinian family. The most contemptible of Emperors accordingly plays, without suspecting it, a part in the religious

JULIA CORNELIA PAULA.³¹ Lamprid., *Heliog.* 4.² Large bronze of the *Cabinet de France*.³ Bust of Parian marble, Museum of the Louvre.

disintegration of Roman society. This profligate madman had also in his way the intoxication of the divine. He is the representative of that confused medley of beliefs whence faith in the one God was even then beginning to emerge. This confusion will be

ANNIA FAUSTINA.¹

found in the mind of his successor, but combined with moral purity; while through it all Elagabalus seeks and takes only that which may excite his passions.

For his absurd extravagances and his infamous debauchery we may turn to the pages of Lampridius. History notes these turpitutes or these follies: it does not delay over them. We need only say that, after the example of Asiatic monarchs, who seek their ministers

¹ Bust of *paronazetto*: Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 58.

in the lowest ranks, when he did not sell the great offices of state, he assigned them to dancers and barbers; that he treated the Senate as a troop of slaves in togas,—which unfortunately they were; that his palace was sanded with gold dust, and that his silken garments, covered with jewels, were never worn twice; that he filled his fish-ponds with rose-water,¹ and that he had naval engagements represented on lakes of wine;² that he finally dressed as a woman, painted his face, wrought at work in wool, and had himself styled *domina* or *imperatrix*, the Emperor then being represented by the son of a cook or some young athlete. In less than four years he espoused four or five wives, whom he repudiated and took back again. The first of these, Julia Cornelia Paula, of eminent family, retained only for one year her title and honors; he carried off the second, Julia Aquilia Severa, from the altar of Vesta,—an act of sacrilege which made even the Romans of that time tremble: the third, Annia Faustina, was descended from Marcus Aurelius: the memory of the great Emperor protected her but for a few weeks against the caprices of the imperial profligate.

Meanwhile, Maesa saw how such a manner of reigning must end. By adroit flattery she induced Elagabalus to give the title of Caesar to his cousin Alexander, and to adopt the latter as his

¹ Lamprid., *Heliog.* 19. During the banquets, the ceiling opened, to let fall upon the guests such a quantity of flowers that many were smothered by them.

² *Ibid.*, 16, 22.

³ Bust of the Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 59.



JULIA MAESA.³

son. He ought to devote himself, she told him, to the enjoyment of his feasts, to his sacred orgies, and to his divine duties, while another had the care of public affairs. This other was

a boy twelve years old, and the adoptive father was but sixteen; the new Caesar had however already manifested his gentle and admirable character, so that his grandmother and his mother centred in him the hope of their house. His gracefulness, his discretion, the strict masters whom he had about him, the perils which it was known that he incurred, and the secret largesses of Mamaea to the praetorians, obtained for him a popularity at which Elagabalus became incensed. The Emperor sought various means to put his rival out of the way quietly. But Mamaea allowed her son to taste no beverage or dish sent by the Emperor; she surrounded him with trusty servants; and the levity of Elagabalus, which permitted his designs to be easily perceived, made it possible also to prevent the execution of them. He at last deter-

mined on an overt attack.

He sent an order to the senators and to the soldiers to take from his cousin the title of Caesar, while at the same time murderers sought the boy in order to kill him. But the order caused a tumult, in which the Emperor narrowly escaped death. He was obliged to go with Alexander to the camp of the praetorians, who required of him the death or dismissal of his unworthy favorites, commanded the Emperor to change his mode of life, and ordered their prefects to see to this, and especially to prevent Alexander from imitating his cousin. They were like the French Cabochiens of 1413, enjoining morality upon the

¹ Statue, heroic size; Collection Mattei; Clarac, *Musée, etc.* pl. 768, No. 2,487 A.



ELAGABALUS.¹

Dauphin, driving from the Hôtel Saint-Pol the musicians and dancers when they lingered too late into the night, and even the councillors who displeased them, conducting the latter to Parliament to be judged, or murdering them on the way thither. There is, however, this difference,—in 1413 Paris was in a state of revolution; while at Rome, in 221, that the soldiery should give orders to the Emperor had become an habitual thing.

On the first of January, 222, the two lads were to go before the Senate to assume the consular dignities. It required all the urging of Maesa and the threat of a new outbreak of the praetorians to induce Elagabalus to allow himself to be accompanied by his adopted son. But he absolutely refused to perform with him at the Capitol the customary ceremonies. At another time he caused a report of the death of Alexander to be put in circulation, in order to judge, from the conduct of the soldiers, whether he might assassinate his young cousin without incurring too great risk. But the soldiery, being secretly informed that the young prince was alive, demanded his presence among them with loud shouts, recalled the guard which they sent each morning to the palace, and shut themselves up in their camp. At this result of his experiment, Elagabalus hastened to appease them by showing to them the Caesar. His mother and Mamaea followed him, each exciting the praetorians against the other. Mamaea at last carried the day. A tumult broke out, blows were interchanged, the friends and ministers of Elagabalus, and Soaemias herself, were slaughtered. That effeminate voluptuary, whom a crumpled rose-leaf disturbed, hid himself in the sinks of the camp. There he was slain; and his corpse, dragged through the streets, was flung into the Tiber, and the god of Emesa narrowly escaped sharing the fate of his pontiff. The Senate consigned to infamy the memory of Elagabalus, and history does the same (March 11, 222).

His cousin, now thirteen years of age,¹ was proclaimed Augustus, and took the name of Marcus Aurelius Alexander, to which the soldiers added—in memory of him who was believed by some to be the new Emperor's grandfather—that of Severus.²

¹ Herodian (v. 7) says that he was entering on his twelfth year when Elagabalus adopted him; he is generally assigned three years more.

² Marcus Aurelius Severus Alexander (Eckhel, vii. 281). I have already described

To mark distinctly that the Oriental orgy was ended, and that the ancient deities dispossessed by the Syrian idol had resumed their sway, Alexander engraved on his coins the title of priest of Rome (*sacerdos Urbis*).¹

(Vol. VI. p. 201) that session of the Senate at which Alexander declined the other names which the Conscrip Fathers desired to confer upon him.

¹ Eckhel, vii. 270.



IVLIA SOAEMIAS AVGSTA.

CHAPTER XCIII.

ALEXANDER SEVERUS (MARCH 11, 222—MARCH 19, 235 A.D.).

I.—REACTION AGAINST THE PRECEDING REIGN; MAMAEA AND ULPIAN; THE COUNCIL OF THE EMPEROR.

WE now see the heritage of Augustus, by the grace of the soldiers, in the hands of two women and a child! What vitality in this Empire, which, though under female sway, yet remained erect and imposing!

But these two women were of distinguished ability. We have already remarked the skilful prudence of Maesa and the lofty character of Alexander's mother. The latter by a well-ordered education developed the favorable tendencies of this gentle and virtuous youth. She placed about her son the ablest masters, taking care that they should also be men of the greatest integrity, and she caused him to be taught enough of literature and art to have a taste and respect for them, but not enough to be tempted to bestow upon them the time demanded by public business. It is noteworthy that Alexander expressed himself more easily in Greek than in Latin. This invasion of Greek into the higher Roman society is a sign of the progress accomplished by another invasion,—that of Oriental hellenism and Alexandrian syncretism, of which this Emperor was also a representative.

“From the day of his accession,” says Herodian.² “he was surrounded with all the pomp of sovereign power; but the care of the Empire was left to the two princesses, who made an effort to bring back good morals and the ancient dignified demeanor. They chose sixteen senators, the most eminent for experience and



GOLD COIN.¹

¹ IVLIA MAMAEA AVG[usta], mother of Alexander Severus.

² vi. i. A coin of 222 bears the words, *Liberalitas Aug.* This was the resuming of the *congiarium* granted *ut moris erat, suscepto imperio*, says Eckhel.

integrity of life, to form the imperial council.¹ Without their approval no measures were carried into execution. The people, the army, the Senate, were delighted with this new form of government, which replaced the most insolent of tyrannies by a sort of aristocracy."

It may be doubted whether the Senate was as satisfied as Herodian says with the new importance given to the *consilium principis*. We shall refer elsewhere to this institution, which took from the ancient masters of Rome their last prerogatives.

The Conscription Fathers gave themselves at least the pleasure of devoting to the infernal gods the Emperor or the consul who, in future, should give a woman a seat in their august assembly. Doubtless this decree of the Senate appeared to them as memorable as the one ordering the victorious Pyrrhus to depart from Italy.²

"The statues of the gods which Elagabalus had taken away," continues the historian, "were at once restored to their places. Those functionaries who had unworthily obtained office were dismissed, and their places filled by the most capable citizens. . . . In order to preserve the Emperor from the mistakes which might be caused by absolute authority, the ardor of youth, or by some of the vices natural to his family, Mamaea strictly guarded the entrance to the palace, and allowed no man to gain admission whose morals were of bad repute."

This reaction against the last reign, these precautions to save the new from the same excesses, were legitimate; and since it had been deemed expedient to make a boy an Emperor, it was fitting to guide him gently from his childish sports to the management of the Empire. This could not better be done than by means of the government of aged men and women, by this paternal and gentle authority, the calm and somnolence of which were calculated to protect Alexander's minority, and to enable him to reach full age, if the soldiers consented to grant him time to do so.

¹ Lampridius (*Iber.* 15) makes the number twenty. The council was complemented, in certain circumstances, by adding other senators, so that the number of fifty Conscription Fathers, required for the validity of a decree, might be attained. This council also made appointments to the Senate (*Ibid.* 18). The last great jurisconsults of Rome, Florentinus Marciianus, Hermogenes, Saturninus, and Modestinus, numerous fragments of whose writings the *Pandects* have preserved to us, were members of this council, together with Paulus and Ulpian.

² Lamprid., *Heliog.* 18. Dating from the time of Alexander Severus, we find no more *senatus-consulta*.

Into the imperial council Mamaea had called her compatriot, Ulpian, whom she appointed praetorian prefect,¹ thus making him the second personage in the state. In reality, considering the age of the Emperor, Ulpian was the first;² for he was present at all the imperial audiences, reported matters to Alexander, with the decisions to be given, and had the conduct of the whole government. Under this great jurisconsult,³ justice was impartial and the police service vigilant. Those who speculated on the destitution of the people, the venality of a judge, or the compliance of a functionary, had to render strict account; but no one lost his life or property without a judgment given after arguments on both sides.⁵ Many honorable rescripts were promulgated. They did not introduce any modifications into the law, but we see in them the provident kindness

JULIA MAMAEA, MOTHER OF ALEXANDER SEVERUS.⁴

¹ He appears to have held this position under Elagabalus (Lamprid., *Alex.* 26, and *Aur. Victor, De Caes.* 26).

² See, in respect to this officer's duties, Vol. VI. p. 533.

³ Of the numerous works of Ulpian, the most important were eighty-three books *Ad Edictum*, and fifty-one *Ad Sabinum*. Numerous fragments remain to us of his *Liber regularum, singularis*. The extracts from these various treatises form a third of the *Digest*.

⁴ Bust of Pentelic marble, Museum of the Louvre.

⁵ This is the assertion of Lampridius; yet the death of the father-in-law of Alexander, and of Turinus, whom the Emperor caused to be suffocated (Vol. VI. p. 228), the murder of several of his councillors (Lamprid., *Alex.* 67), and some others, were not the result of judicial orders.

which marks this reign,¹ — a characteristic also of the legislation of the Antonines and of Severus. Mention is even made in them of the liberty of the subjects, — conditioned, it is true, upon their good will and obedience.²

The ability of these wise councillors is further marked by administrative details, some of which were of real importance. The praetorian prefecture gave senatorial rank, — the extension of the judicial cognizance of the prefect, who sometimes had to sit in judgment on senators, rendering this change necessary; and his decisions had the force of law when they were not contrary to ordinances already existing.³ With Ulpian this office attained the zenith of its power.

Fourteen curators, all of consular rank, were intrusted with the duty of deciding, together with the urban prefect, upon all affairs concerning the fourteen districts of the city.⁴ This edict furnished a municipal council to the capital of the Empire, which, in respect to the maintenance of public order, had hitherto been subject to the sole authority of the prefect; it prescribed, moreover, that resolutions, in order to be valid, should be adopted in presence of all the members, or at least of a majority of them. This council, appointed, not elected, was none the less for Rome a guarantee of better administration.

The *assessores* of the presidents were entitled to salaries, which gave them the character of public functionaries, but increased the expenditures of the treasury;⁵ and it was forbidden to the provincial governors, as well as to the persons employed about them, to engage in business or money-lending in the countries under their rule. We have seen⁶ what wise recommendations Ulpian made to them for the protection of the common people.

It had long been the custom to make grants of lands to the veterans. The rule was now established that officers and soldiers put in possession of domains on the frontiers might transmit

¹ For instance: . . . *Cavetur ut si patronus libertum suum non aluerit, jus patroni perdat* (*Digest*, xxxvii. 14, 5, sec. 1).

² *Dig. st.*, xl ix. 1, 25: . . . *Tantum mihi curae est eorum, qui reguntur, libertatis, quantum et bona voluntatis eorum et obedientiae.*

³ *Code*, i. 26, 2, *ann.* 235.

⁴ *Lamprid.*, *Alex.* §2.

⁵ *Ibid.* 45. Pescennius Niger had already attempted to introduce this reform, *ne consiliarii eos gravarent quibus assidebant* (*Spart.*, *Nig.* 7).

⁶ Vol. VI. p. 166.

them to their children when the latter followed the profession of arms; otherwise the land reverted to the imperial treasury.¹ These were military benefices, and the beginning of a new order of property.

The post of *dux*,—that is, of chief of the army, without territorial command,—which we have seen originating under Severus, appears now to have become a regular office.²

Finally, the government constituted what may be called “banks of deposit,”³ and organized into corporations the trades which had not as yet taken that form; assigning to each one a *defensor*, as will later be given to the cities,⁵ and establishing for them a special jurisdiction. Some were very rich,—the corporation of the money-changers, for example, who erected an arch to Septimius Severus. It was a new kind of industry, beginning or becoming developed.



MONETA
RESTITUTA.⁴

II.—THE GENTLENESS, PIETY, AND WEAKNESS OF ALEXANDER SEVERUS.

WHAT part had Alexander himself in these measures? With an Emperor of thirteen, the councillors must have retained power for a long period. But it may be said that all which they did in the interests of the subjects corresponded, if not with the ideas, at least with the feelings of the young ruler.

Alexander's biographer has sought to make of this reign what Xenophon makes of the reign of Cyrus,—a beautiful “morality;” and although this scribe of Constantine had not yet embraced his master's religion, to flatter Constantine he has represented the

¹ Lamprid., *Alex.* 57.

² Lamprid., *ibid.* 51. Capitolinus, in the life of Gordian III., also speaks of *duces honorati*, that is, honorary dukes.

³ Lamprid., *ibid.* 38. Medals, *Moneta restituta*, etc., attest also a monetary reform (Eckhel, vii. 279); but the explanations of Lampridius on this subject (39) throw no light on the question.

⁴ MON. RESTITVTAA. Moneta standing, holding a balance and a horn of plenty (Medium bronze of Alexander Severus).

⁵ Lamprid., *ibid.* 22 and 33. This *defensor* was no doubt a different person from the *patronus*.

pagan Emperor who was least pagan, as already half-Christian. From this it has resulted that Alexander has been the favorite of history; as if, on emerging from the corrupt atmosphere of the preceding period, and before entering the sanguinary gloom of the following age, historians had taken pleasure in the description of this graceful lad, whom youth, virtue, and misfortune have consecrated. In certain respects this good fame of Alexander is legitimate. After the saturnalia of the late reign we have an Emperor pure in morals, simple in tastes, and making his life a public example more efficacious than all legal enactments. We feel an affection for this amiable youth who would have the public crier proclaim, while criminals were being chastised, these words, which were also graven on the front of his palace: "Do not to another what you would not have done to yourself;" who wrote in verse the lives of the good Emperors,¹ and each day in his *lararium* spent a little time silent before the images of those whom he called the benefactors of humanity,—monarchs or philosophers, founders of empires or religions;² who, finally, constantly read the *Republic* of Plato, Cicero's treatise *De Officiis*, and the *Epistles* of Horace, to draw from these noble books his rules of conduct. Every seventh day he went up to the Capitol and visited the temples of the city,—without, however, always making rich offerings in them, thinking, with Persius, that the worship loved by the gods is the practice of virtue, and that they have no need of gold,—

. . . In sanctis quid facit aurum?

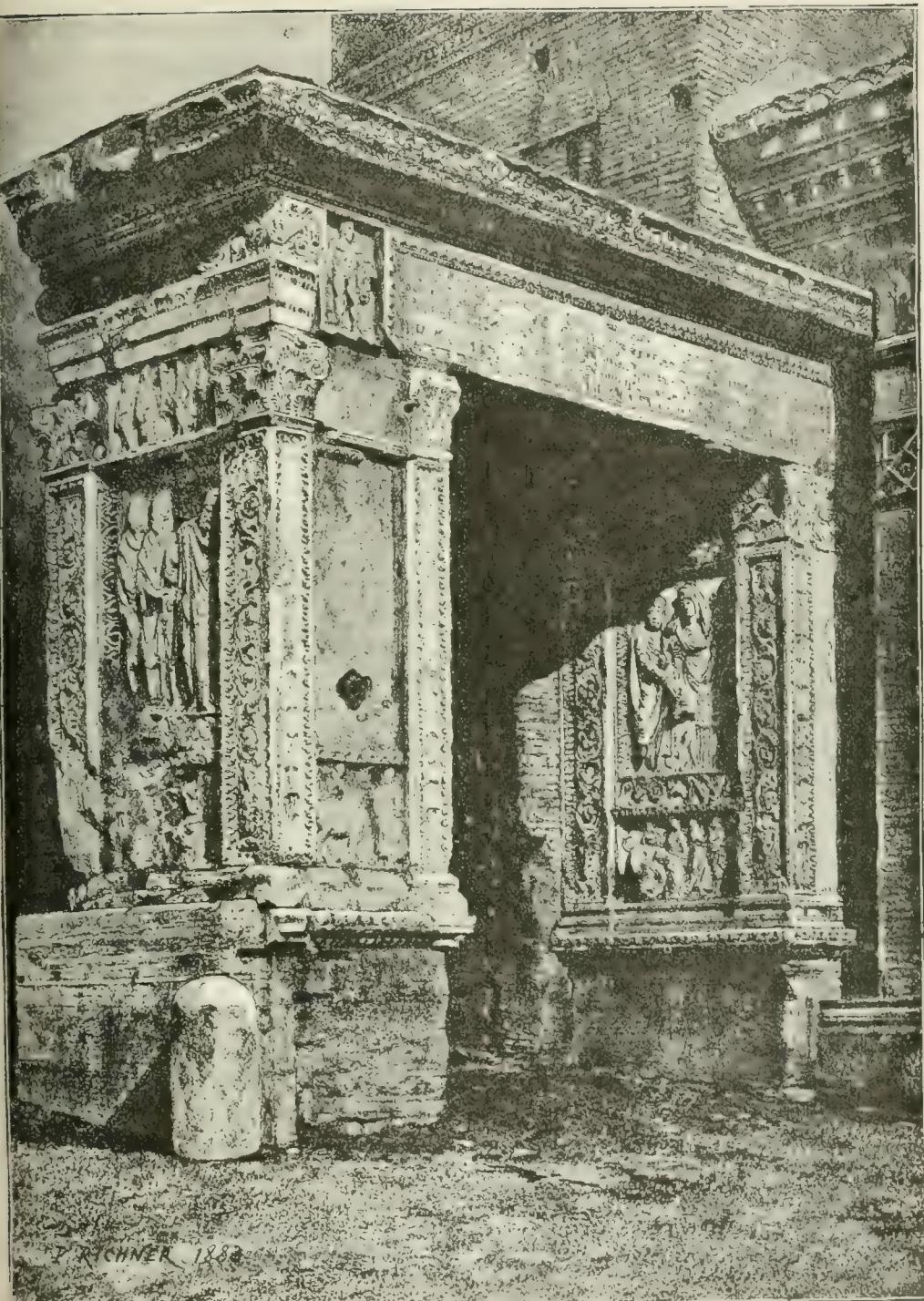
But he was liberal to the poor, to his friends, and to those of his officers who had well fulfilled their duties.

The great alimentary institution of Trajan will be remembered; this Alexander continued and extended;³ and founded another: he

¹ . . . *Vitas principum honorum versibus scripsit* (Lamprid., *Alex.* 27).

² Lampridius, who supplies this information (*Alex.* 28), adds this detail: "He never entered into his oratory unless *si facultas esset, id est, si non cum uxore cubuisset*." This was a general rule, of which Ovid had already spoken (*Fasti*, ii. 329, and iv. 657). The Church inherited this custom. "This kind of abstinence," says Abbé Greppo, "was practised in the primitive Church prior to participation in the holy mysteries, as is still the case in the churches of the East, whose ministers are not constrained to celibacy" (*Trois mém. d'hist. ecclés.* p. 780). The Russian peasant observes the same rule the day preceding the Sabbath.

³ *Puellas et pueros Mammacanas et Mammacanos instituit* (Lamprid., *Alex.* 56). A coin of Plautilla, which represents a woman carrying a child, shows that Severus also took care of this institution (Eckhel, vii. 226).



THE ARCH OF THE MONEY-CHANGERS AT ROME.

lent money to poor families that they might buy land, and required of them only an interest of three per cent, payable from the product of the property.¹ Frequently he even made a gift of land, slaves, cattle, and implements of agriculture. While he augmented the tax on the trades supplying articles of luxury, on the goldsmiths, gilders, furriers, etc., he diminished the other imposts, and lamented that fiscal agents were a necessary evil. He granted remissions to a number of cities, on condition that the money which he thus left to them should be employed in rebuilding their dilapidated edifices; he restored at his own expense many old bridges and constructed new ones. And

finally, he founded schools, paid professors, pensioned pupils, and compensated advocates who took nothing from their clients:²

these are our scholarships and our

judiciary aid. For himself, great frugality and much economy, to the extent of being obliged to borrow silver ware and slaves when he gave a state banquet; towards all, plebeians or senators, even towards his own domestics, an affability which, in the Emperor, did not allow the master to be seen. At twenty he was a sage.

This wisdom,—which was not the fruit of experience, but a gift of nature,—this kindness, which showed itself in everything, does honor to the man; of the ruler other things are demanded. His filial tenderness was weakness when he dared not resist his mother, who, alarmed by the many catastrophes she had witnessed,

¹ Lamprid., *Alex.* 21. As to imposts, it is impossible to admit, with Lampridius, that he reduced them to the twentieth of what Elagabalus exacted. On the payment of the tax in gold, see above, p. 81, note 3.

² *Rhetoribus, grammaticis, medicis, aruspiciis, mathematicis, mechanicis, architectis salaria instituit, et auditoria decrevit, et discipulos cum annonis pauperum filios modo ingenuos dari jussit. Etiam in provinciis oratoribus forensibus multum detulit, plerisque etiam annonas dedit, quos constitisset gratis agere* (Lamprid., *Alex.* 44).

³ The Empress Sallustia Orbiana, second wife of Alexander Severus, wearing a diadem; on the reverse, FECVN'DITAS TEMPORVM. Orbiana seated; before her, Fecundity kneeling, holding a horn of plenty and carrying two children. (Bronze medallion.)



SALLUSTIA ORBIANA.³

sought in heaping up treasure¹ a safeguard against evil days,—as if, for her and for her son, in case of defeat, there could be any other refuge than death. This weakness even becomes odious if it be true, as Herodian relates, that he allowed Mamaea to drive from the palace his young wife, who claimed the honors of an *augusta*, and who deserved them;² if he suffered his father-in-law to be put to death for having complained to the authorities of the time—the soldiers of the praetorium—of insults which he had received from the Empress.³

Alexander's regret that he could not abolish all taxes is the language of a woman or of a courtier of the rabble, and his love for Plato's *Republic* betrays a mind which the good sense of Horace, his other favorite, did not suffice to preserve from fair illusions. His prohibition to senators of making investments, to capitalists of lending at more than three per cent, to those whose consciences were disquieted, of presenting themselves at the imperial receptions,—these moral orders, proclaimed by the herald or affixed to edicts, show a good disposition; but how was it possible to secure their execution? The regulations about costumes for the purpose of distinguishing the different orders of citizens, about garments for summer and winter, for fair weather and rain, were other puerilities, of which Ulpian and Paulus surely prescribed very little. Before appointing a functionary, the Emperor published the candidate's name, and invited the citizens, in case the person had committed any crime, to denounce him; adding, however, that the informer would be punished with death if he did not furnish proof of his accusation. This is a twofold absurdity: a wise government is bound to make its own investigations; and no one was tempted to respond to an appeal when so terrible a penalty might be incurred. But Alexander Severus seems to have sought to transform the Empire into an ideal republic.

¹ See on this subject the sarcasms of Julian in the *Caesars*.

² The name of this young woman is not known; but after having repudiated her, Alexander re-married, and though no author has spoken of his second wife, we have coins of hers and an inscription in which she is named with the title of *augusta*: Gnaea Seia Herennia Sallustia Barbia Orbiana Augusta. See Eckhel, vii. 284, and *Corp. Inscr. Lat.* ii. 3,734.

³ Others accuse the father-in-law of a conspiracy against his son in-law,—which is hardly probable. The catastrophe was doubtless brought about by a women's quarrel. The young Empress is believed to have had the fate of Plautilla, but without deserving it, for she loved her husband tenderly (Herod., vi. 5; Lamprid., Alex. 49).

Still further it is usual to praise the pious thought which led him to place, in his *lararium*, Apollonius of Tyana by the side of Jesus, Orpheus beside Abraham,—a vague religion of humanity, whose confused aspirations are, however, sufficient for some choice souls. Saint Augustine tells us of a matron who had constructed a miniature chapel, in which she burned incense before the images of Jesus and Paul, of Homer and Pythagoras.¹ These acts of homage to sanctity and genius honor the individual; but it was not by means of so simple a form of faith that populations eager for the marvellous could be controlled.

Like him whose name and virtues the young Emperor possessed, Alexander would have been in private life the noblest of men; in a position of sovereign power he was, far more than Marcus Aurelius, inadequate. The government of human affairs is truly a masculine task. Those who succeed in it are the men by nature fitted to rule, men of vigorous mind and of strong will. These qualities were especially necessary in a state like the Roman Empire; and—it must be acknowledged—Alexander Severus did not possess them. His bust in the Louvre, with its weak and undecided features, suggests a mild-mannered person, incapable of acting, with eyes that look but do not see. Julian, in the *Caesars*, represents him sitting sadly on the steps leading to the hall where the Emperors and gods are going to banquet; Silenus mocks at him and at his mother, the hoarder of treasure; Justice does indeed consent to chastise his murderers, but she turns away “from the poor fool, the great simpleton, who in a corner bewails his misfortune!”

For several years the soldiery, satiated, had left the Empire at peace. But to preserve discipline among these coarse, greedy, and violent men, who knew their own strength and knew nothing else,—neither the Empire, nor magistrates, nor the law,—there was needed a ruler who would impose upon them a respectful fear as well as obedience, who would keep them in harness, glut them with booty and with glory, and make them proud of being soldiers. With its mighty army of mercenaries, the Empire was condemned to have for successful rulers none but great generals. Severus had been such; Alexander was not. Accordingly, civil

¹ *Liber de Haeresibus*, iii. 7.

order, which had been protected by the former against his soldiers, could not be protected by the latter.

It is said that, before renouncing philosophy and the arts, he had consulted the *Sortes Vergilianae*, and that the poet-prophet had responded by the famous lines:—

Excedent alii spirantia mollius aera.
· · · · ·

Tu regere imperio populos, Romane memento.

Lampridius ascribes to his hero the virtues which these verses demand in him who is to wield the sovereign power, representing Alexander as a stern defender of the ancient discipline. “The soldiers,” he says, “called him Severus on account of his excessive severity;”¹ and as a proof he shows the populations flocking together on the passage of the army, and “taking the soldiers for senators;”² such was the gravity of their mien and the propriety of their conduct, and elsewhere he quotes certain classic reminiscences which the Emperor turned to present use. A senator known for his peculations comes and salutes him at the curia; Alexander repeats against him Cicero’s apostrophe to Catiline: *O tempora, O mores! vivit; immo in senatum venit!* A legion mutinies; he reproves it in the words of Caesar: “Retire, Quirites.” Some of the officers who had not been able to control their men were, it is true, put to death; but at the end of a month the mutinous legion was reinstated. Mention is also made of cohorts decimated.

Facts like the following do not, however, permit us to give to this reign such a character for strict discipline. A quarrel arose in Rome between the civilians and the praetorians. Both sides were much in earnest;³ but before the populace would have dared to affront the troops, they must have been driven to extremities by many deeds of insolence, of which we know that the soldiers were not sparing. There was fighting for three days, with much bloodshed. At last the praetorians, driven from the streets, set fire to the houses; and not until the conflagration

¹ Lamprid., *Alex.* 25.

² . . . *Ut non milites sed senatores transire diceres (ibid. 49).*

³ See what is said of the Roman *plebs* in the appendix to book lxxix. of Dion by the anonymous author who wrote this passage.

threatened to involve the whole city, did the two parties consent to desist. We do not know what part the government took in this affair; but we are justified in saying that such disorders occur only under a feeble authority, and we may ask ourselves what the



ALEXANDER SEVERUS.¹

legionaries in the provinces did, if the praetorians, so devoted to the young Emperor, conducted themselves thus in his very presence.

Mamaea had at first placed at the head of the praetorians two experienced generals, Flavianus and Chrestus; later, she also

¹ Bust of the Vatican.

gave them Ulpian for a colleague. These men of war did not relish finding civilians in the praetorium, who, bringing thither the regular habits of magistrates, saw to it that ordinances were executed. The new prefect was displeasing to the cohorts and to their chiefs, who formed a scheme for getting rid of him.¹ Ulpian anticipated them by having the two prefects and their accomplices put to death. This tragedy provoked another. The whole corps took up the cause of the victims, and Ulpian's life was several times in danger. In a final and formidable riot he took refuge in the palace; the soldiers forced the gates and slew him at the feet of Alexander, who vainly threw over him the imperial purple.² This was in 228. We seem to be on the shores of the Bosphorus, hearing janissaries demand the head of a vizier.

A certain Epagathus, formerly a confidential agent of Caracalla and Maerinus, had played a part in this catastrophe by inciting the soldiers against Ulpian. He was only a freedman; but the government did not dare to punish him, for fear of exciting a new revolt. He was sent on a mission into Egypt, then recalled, under a pretext, into Crete, where the executioner awaited him.³ This seraglio-justice would of itself prove the incurable weakness of the government.

The following account of Dion is another indication to the same effect. Our historian was not "a thunderbolt of war," and in the army it does not seem probable that he ever took any very decided measures. Yet when he returned from his government of Pannonia the praetorians were of opinion that he had shown himself too severe in discipline. "They demanded my punishment," he says, "fearing lest they should be submitted to a similar rule. Instead of paying attention to their complaints, the Emperor gave me the consulship. But the displeasure of the praetorians made him fear that, when they saw me with the insignia of this dignity, they might kill me, and he ordered me to spend the remainder of my term of office at some place in Italy, outside Rome."⁴ The prudent consul did better; finding that public life was becoming too difficult, he abandoned Rome, Italy, even his

¹ Zosimus, i. 11.

² . . . Quem super a militum ira objectu purpurae suae defendit (Alexander). (Lamprid., Alex. 51.)

³ Dion, lxxx. 2, 4.

⁴ Id., lxxx. 4 and 5.

great book of history, which he closed with this last narrative, and Homer's lines : —

“But Jove, beyond the encountering arms, the dust,
The carnage, and the bloodshed and the din,
Bore Hector.”¹

Dion had nothing in common with Hector; but it was from a bloody fray that he likewise retired.

We here take leave of a feeble writer,—a man, however, who having studied the Republic in its grandeur and its decadence, the Empire under Augustus and Nero, Hadrian and Commodus, was able to follow the logical connection of this history developing through the centuries under the double action of political wisdom and of necessities produced by circumstances. If we inquire what were his sentiments in the matter of government,² we shall see that, notwithstanding the acts of cruelty which he relates, notwithstanding those of which he himself had been the witness and wellnigh the victim, Dion was a strong partisan of the imperial monarchy. When the Emperor was a bad one, men longed for a change of ruler, but without desiring a change in the form of government. No one at that time imagined any other, and it must also be admitted, no other was possible. Dion only asks of the Emperor that he should be on good terms with the Senate, his council. This was the wish of Tacitus, and it had been the practice of the Antonines. Unfortunately, since Caracalla, and now more and more every day, the Emperors and the consuls, the praetorian prefects and the senators, were all of them at the mercy of the soldiery; and the characteristic of such rule is frequency of riotous disturbances.

Revolts, indeed, broke out everywhere.—some, says a contemporary, very formidable;³ and it was necessary to disband entire legions.⁴ Those of Mesopotamia killed their chief, Flavius Heraclio, and made an emperor, who, to escape from them, threw himself into the Euphrates and was drowned. Another assumed the purple in Osrhoene. A third attempted to assume it at Rome even.

¹ *Iliad*, xi. 163 [Bryant's trans.].

² Dion, lii. 13 *et seq.*

³ *Id.*, lxxx. 3. Cf. Zosimus, i. 12.

⁴ Cf. Lamprid., *Alex.* 53, 54, 59; Herod., vi. 4, 7; Aur. Victor, *De Caes.* xxiv. 3; Dion, lxxx. 4.

In the case of this last person, the Emperor, informed of the design, invites him to the palace, takes him to the Senate, to the army, overwhelms him with matters of business, and breaks him down with fatigue. After a few days, the would-be emperor asks leave to return to his house and his obscurity.

These seditions and attempts miscarry; but the Empire is shaken by them, and they afford encouragement to the enemy. In Mauretania Tingitana, on the Illyrian and the Armenian frontiers, there are invaders to be repelled; the Germans ravage a part of Gaul, and the Persians reclaim the ancient territory of Cyrus,—that is to say, Asia as far as the Cyclades.

III.—THE SASSANIDAE.

SINCE the day when Arsaces the Brave had revolted against the Seleucidae, four hundred and seventy years¹ had elapsed,—a very long duration for an Oriental dynasty. The Parthian monarchy had extended itself from the Euphrates to the Indus; but the Arsacidae—men of shrewdness or violence, according to the occasion—had nothing of the organizing genius of Rome. They neither established a permanent—and therefore a well-organized—army, nor an administration binding together the different elements of the state so as to form a homogeneous whole. They suffered to exist about them a mighty feudalism,² the cause of constant disturbances, and in their provinces populations which, having in common with the rest of the Empire nothing except the tribute paid to the Great King, retained their customs, their national memories and chiefs,—that is to say, the hope and the means of some day regaining their independence. The indignities which Trajan, Avidius Cassius, and Septimius Severus, and even Caracalla, had inflicted upon the Parthian monarchy, had destroyed its prestige, which the treaty with Macrinus did not restore.

¹ Or 476 according to other reckonings. Cf. De Sainte-Croix, *Mém. sur le gouvernement des Parthes*, p. 30.

² Dion, xli. 15; Tac., *Ann.* xi. 10; and Herod., vi. 12.

In the mountains of Persis lived a man of royal blood, Ardashir, or Artaxerxes, regarded as a descendant of Darius, and said to be son or grandson of Sassan, whence the name of his race, the Sassanidae.¹ Admitted into the household of the governor of Persis, he attracted notice by his courage and address, gained the favor of the people as well as of his master, and, the latter having been displaced, he slew the succeeding king, raised a revolt among the Persians, as Cyrus had formerly done, drew in the neighboring nations, with whom he had long before established a good understanding, and vanquished the Parthians in three battles. In the last, Artabanus was killed, and Ardashir assumed the tiara (226-227). On the cliff of Nakschi-Roustan, in the environs of Persepolis, may be seen two warriors engaged in single combat. It is Ardashir wresting the diadem from his rival. By placing this memorial of his victory near the ancient capital of the Achaemenidae, he sought to testify to all eyes that his victory was the restoration of the empire of Cyrus.

Oriental monarchies are established with the same rapidity that characterizes their decline. In a few years the mountaineers of Persis had come back into the capitals of the first Achaemenidae, "and all the kings had put on the sash of submission, suspended from their ears the ring of servitude, and taken upon their shoulders the harness of obedience."³ In the place of an old and enfeebled state, Rome now beheld, along her eastern frontier, an empire abounding in warlike zeal, as is always the case with new powers.

The revolution just accomplished was religious as well as polit-

¹ According to Sainte-Croix (*ibid.* p. 22) the Persians had retained their national chiefs; and Ardashir, at the time of the revolt, was in authority over the country.

² Artaxerxes wears the round tiara, adorned with the symbol, in the form of a caduceus, called *mahrou*. The Pehlvi legend gives the name of the prince. (Cornelian, cut in cabochon, 35 millim. by 25. Gem of the *Cabinet de France*, No. 1,339.)

³ Mirkhond, *Hist. des Sassanides*, tr. Sylvestre de Sacy, p. 278.

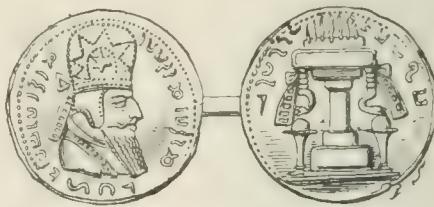


ARTAXERXES I.²

ideal. The Arsacidae, feeling the influence of the civilization which Alexander had carried into Eastern Asia, had become Hellenized. They delighted in Greek customs, spoke the language of Greece, adored some of its gods, were accustomed to have the dramas of the great Athenian poets represented at their court, and in the legends on their coins, which were in Greek, they adopted, among other titles, that of Philhellenes.¹

This mental culture disposed them to tolerance, and Christianity had profited by it to make an entrance into their provinces. But the tributary nations had preserved the old Persian worship, Mazdaism;

the consecrated fire was always burning on their sacred pyres,

ORMUZD.³SILVER COIN OF ARTAXERXES.²

and the magi were numerous. They served the cause of him who was announced as the avenger of Ormuzd and the restorer of the laws of Zoroaster. This monotheistic religion — one of those which do most honor to humanity — placed below the infinite being, Aboura-Mazda, *izeds*, or good genii, celestial spirits and ministers of the will of the Most High. Hence it did not require much flattery to induce the magi to transform a powerful and religious king into a visible *ized* ; and Sapor could say, without giving

offence: “Do you not know that I am of the race of the gods ?”⁴

In return for the assistance which these priests gave him, Ardshir accorded them great influence. “He restored,” says a

¹ De Sacy, *Mém. sur diverses antiquités de la Perse*, p. 44.

² Coin of Artaxerxes, bearing on the reverse a lighted pyre. At the right, the head of Artaxerxes, with the tiara bearing the star, symbol of the sun, and the legend: “The Adorer of Ormuzd. . . .” On the reverse, a pyre, from which dart flames. Legend: “The Divine Artaxerxes.” Silver coin.

³ The bust of Ormuzd, surrounded by flames and placed on a pyre. Pahlvi inscription; annular seal. (Intaglio on veined agate, 36 millim. diameter; *Cabinet de France*, No. 1,336.)

⁴ De Sacy, *Mémoire*, etc., pp. 36–41. On the monotheistic character of Mazdæism, see the articles of M. Barthélémy Saint-Hilaire, *Journal des Savants*, June and July, 1878.

Greek historian, “the magi to honor.”¹ This body of clergy, again restored to power, will make intolerance the political law of the Sassanidae and will let persecution loose against the Christians; the religious and national zeal of these monarchs was able, however, to give to the new dynasty a vitality and renown which the preceding had not known.² The danger to the Roman Empire thus increasing in this quarter, Rome was presently compelled to withdraw her forces from the line of the Rhine and the Danube in order to fortify that of the Euphrates and the Tigris; and that she might watch this new enemy from a nearer point, she ended by displacing the centre of her power, and removing her capital from the West to the East.

The war of four centuries which is about to begin between the two empires is therefore one of those many wars which religious zeal has kindled. It is characterized at first, in the case of both nations, by revived recollections of the expedition of Alexander,—characterized on one side by admiration and reverence, on the other by the bitterest hatred. We have seen Caracalla honoring the memory of the Macedonian hero, the second Severus taking his name, and the legions organizing in phalanx. Men felt the shade of the Greek conqueror would march before the Roman army as its guide on the road to Ctesiphon. On the other side of the Tigris, this Alexander, whose generous soul we are wont to extol, had become to the magi, in their patriotic and religious lament, “the accursed one” who slaughtered the nobles and priests, who “burned the books of revelation,” and who “is burning, in his turn, in eternal flames.” Even to this day the Parsees never speak of “Iskender Roumi” except as an accursed tyrant. “After him,” said they, “religion was brought low, and the faithful into oppression, until King Ardishir re-established the true faith.”³ These conflicting sentiments announce the importance of the struggle.

¹ Εξ οὐ καὶ πασὶ Πέρσαις οἱ Μάγοι ἐπίδοξοι (Niceph., *Hist. eccl.* i. 55, ed. of 1630); Agathias (vol. ii. pp. 64, 65) thinks the same. M. de Harlez (*Avesta*, p. xxxv) says that Ardishir was of the race of the magi, and himself a magus.

² On their coins the Sassanidae assume the title of “servant of Ormuzd,” and on the reverse they have placed “the altar of fire,”—a representation and title which are found on the medals of the Arsacidae. See De Saey, *Mém. sur diverses antiqu. de la Perse*, pp. 171 *et seq.*

³ See the article of M. James Darmesteter, *La Légende d'Alexandre chez les Perses*, in vol. xxxv. of the *Bibliothèque des Hautes-Études*.

IV.—EXPEDITIONS AGAINST THE PERSIANS AND THE GERMANS; DEATH OF ALEXANDER SEVERUS

BEFORE engaging in close contest with the great Empire of the West, the son of Sassan turned his weapons against the neighboring populations of Roman Mesopotamia. He attacked the city of Atra, the stronghold of the Scenite Arabs, but with no better fortune than Trajan and Severus had had in similar attempts; and he endeavored to overthrow the Arsacidae of Armenia, who from their hill-tops and inaccessible fortresses defied invasion. These expeditions doubtless had for him but a secondary interest; at least these reverses do not appear to have lessened his hopes, and in 231 he invaded the Roman province.

At this news Alexander and his pacific councillors wrote to the Persian a beautiful letter, full of the most edifying advice. The ravages continued; Nisibis was besieged, and the enemy's scouts penetrated as far as Cappadocia. "All these lands belong to me," said Ardashir; and it seemed as if he were going to take them. There was no alternative at Rome but to be resigned to war; great preparations were made, and from each province, from each army, went forth detachments on their way towards Syria. Alexander quitted his capital in tears, but firmly resolved to do his duty, if not as a soldier, at least as an Emperor.¹ He took the road through Illyria and Thrace, collecting soldiers on his march, and entered Syria with a large army. He there found the troops given up to disorder and mutiny; perhaps there had even been a revolt, if the proclamation of an emperor by the army of Mesopotamia may be referred to this time. On the arrival of Alexander and reinforcements sent by the legions of Pannonia, all became quiet. A phalanx of thirty thousand men was organized, in remembrance of the phalanx of the Macedonian hero; Alexander even would have his guard armed with *argyraspides*, or shields of silver. Four hundred Persians, with splendid dress and weapons, came to summon the Emperor to evacuate Asia; he considered the demand insolent, and, refusing to recognize them as ambassadors, shut them up in Phrygia, where villages

¹ Herodian says (vii. 2) that he was accused of indolence and timidity in war.

and lands were assigned them, and then entered on the campaign in 232.

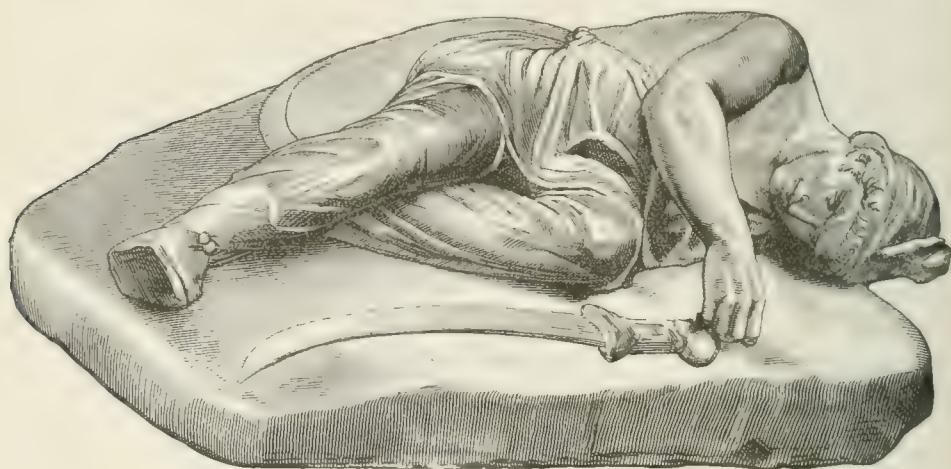
From this point accounts differ. According to a contemporary, the Emperor divided his army into three corps. The first advanced through Armenia,—a country in alliance with the Romans,—intending thence to enter the territory of the Medes; the second went, by way of the desert, towards the confluence of the Tigris and the Euphrates, from which point they could directly threaten Persia; the third marched through Upper Mesopotamia, but very slowly,—for which Mamaea is held responsible, who feared to expose her son. The army of the North amassed much booty,—suffering, however, considerable losses, and without obtaining any serious result, because this route could not conduct them into the heart of the new empire. The Persians opposed slight forces to this somewhat remote attack; they massed themselves against the army of the South, which they crushed, and then against that of the centre, which, composed in great part of soldiers accustomed, on the banks of the Danube and the Rhine, to cold and dampness, was prostrated by the dry and burning heat of the desert. Under this climate, which requires sobriety, “the Illyrians” drank and ate as in Germany. This error in diet was extremely fatal to them; the mortality brought on the plague, and it became necessary to fall back, after



JULIA MAMAEA AS VENUS PUDICA.¹

¹ Museum of the Louvre. Statue of Pentelic marble, formerly thought to represent Julia Soaemias. The antique head is reproduced; the attributes of Ceres have been added by a modern artist. The Empresses were often represented in the character of Venus. The statues in the “hall of the Venuses” in the Museum of Naples are portraits rather than ideal figures.

a few successes of doubtful value. Alexander himself fell ill from fatigue and anxiety. As in the time of Antony, the retreat of the army of the North across the mountains of Armenia was disastrous, and Roman corpses again strewed the roads of this country in the year 233. But the number who perished was never counted. These soldiers, recruited among the Barbarians¹ and from the dregs of the Roman populace, left behind them neither relatives nor friends to lament their death; and it was

DEAD PERSIAN WARRIOR²

easy, by means of largesses, to persuade the survivors that the late campaign had been skilfully planned and victorious.

In truth, neither side was defeated. The Persians might congratulate themselves on a great success; but Mesopotamia, guarded by the fortresses of Severus, was not encroached upon, and not a foot of Roman territory had been conquered. Moreover, if they had exterminated one imperial army, and had stopped the advance of another, it was not without having themselves lost heavily. Accordingly, as soon as the danger of a Roman invasion had disappeared, their irregular troops dispersed, each carrying home his booty. However, the Persians had not attained³ their purpose, and the Romans had accomplished theirs. Far from

¹ The army which Alexander subsequently led into Gaul was composed of Barbarians: *Omnis apparatus . . . potentissimus quidem per Armenios et Osrhoenos et Paghos et omnis generis hominum* (*Lamprid.*, *Alex.* 61). Herodian (vi. 17) adds that many Moors were also found in it.

² Marble of the Museum of Naples.

being conquered. Roman Asia had been delivered. The victory unquestionably remained with those who had obtained the result which they desired. But the two empires had come into collision once more without either of them crushing the other; and it was destined thus to continue until a new element,—the religious and aggressive fanaticism of the Arabs,—should change the conditions of the struggle.

The second account is a hymn of triumph for the Romans.

Extract from the acts of the Senate, the seventh day before the kalends of October (Sept. 25, 233); speech of the Emperor:

"Conscript Fathers, we have vanquished the Persians. A long discourse is unnecessary; it is only of importance that you should know what were their forces and their preparations. They had seven hundred elephants bearing towers filled with archers. Of these we captured three hundred; two hundred were killed on the spot; we have brought eighteen to Rome. They had a thousand chariots armed with scythes: we might have brought home two hundred of them, the horses of which have perished: but we did not think it necessary, because it would be easy to present others to you. We have defeated a hundred and twenty thousand horsemen, and killed during the war ten thousand of their cataphracti.² We have captured a great number of Persians, whom we have sold. We have reconquered all the territory which is between the two rivers; namely, Mesopotamia, which the licentious Elagabalus had allowed to be lost. We have put to rout this king Artaxerxes, whom his renown and his forces rendered so formidable; and the land of the Persians has witnessed his flight, abandoning his ensigns in the same localities where we once lost ours. This, Conscript Fathers, is what we have done. The soldiers come back rich: victory makes them forget their fatigue. It is for you now to decree thanksgivings in testimony of our gratitude to the gods."



CONGIARIUM.¹

¹ Coin commemorative of the congiarium given by Alexander Severus. LIBERALITAS AVGVSTI V SC. Alexander seated upon a stage: behind, the praetorian prefect and a soldier; before, Liberality; at the bottom a citizen mounting the steps. (Large bronze, Cohen, No. 288.)

² Horsemen covered with defensive armor from head to foot: see Amm. Marcellin. xvi. 10.

On the morrow, in honor of this grand success, a congiarium was given to the people, and the Persian games were celebrated. The eighteen elephants which were displayed there, led men to believe in the three hundred said to have been captured.¹ There was therefore no room to doubt that Rome had now renewed the glory of Severus and Trajan.²

Certainly Rome had need that this bulletin of victory should be credited. Germany was in agitation. Seeing the dismantling of the camps which barred the road into Gaul and Illyria, the Barbarians had found the occasion propitious for renewing their predatory incursions. For a long while the frontier of the Rhine had ceased to be threatened, and in place of the eight legions which the first Emperor had kept here, there were now only four. It had therefore been easy for the Germans to pass between the remote garrisons and ravage Gaul. Hence, while waiting until the Illyrians came back from the East, it was well to have their return preceded by the report of a great victory. It was quite certain that the words pronounced in the Senate would re-echo on the banks of the Rhine.

Several months were employed in reorganizing the forces of the West, and in 234³ Alexander set out for Gaul. After reaching the environs of Mayence with his mother, he made another effort

¹ Perhaps there were none at all. Lampridius (57) speaks of a triumphal car drawn by four elephants; the medals show only a chariot and four horses (Eckhel, vii. 276). On his side, Ardashir attested his victory to his subjects by causing gold coins to be struck. The Emperors permitting neither the provinces nor the allies to utter gold coin, the aurei with the Emperor's effigy were alone in circulation; the Roman merchants could accept no others, and all trade was conducted with these coins. Procopius relates that Justinian declared war against the Arabs because they had paid the tribute in pieces of gold not bearing the imperial effigy (*De Bello Goth.*, iii. 33; *Zonaras*, xiv. 22). In the interest of the commercial relations of their subjects, the Arsacidae had been obliged to submit to this necessity, and had not coined gold money. The Sassanidae coined it, but in small quantity (Mommsen, *Hist. de la monnaie romaine*, tr. Blacas, p. 16).

² An inscription recently deciphered at Kef (Siega Veneria), in Tunis (*Bull. épigr. de la Gaule*, 1883, p. 3), mentions an offering of the *splendidissimus ordo* of the decurions, *Fortunae Redui Aug.*, for the triumphal return of Alexander Severus. This inscription, together with another of Pesth, leads us to think that Mamaea had accompanied her son into the East, as she followed him in the expedition against the Germans; this persistence of the "avaricious mother" in remaining always with the young Emperor was no doubt one of the causes of the catastrophe which cost both of them their lives.

³ *Profectio Aug.* (Eckhel, vii. 277). Lampridius (*Alex. 60*) asserts that a Druidess told him, *Gallico sermone*, not to expect victory, and not to rely on his soldiers. The Druids had fallen to the condition of mere fortune-tellers. It is known that Aurelian and Diocletian consulted them to learn the future.

to avoid war. He proposed peace to the Germans, with gold and presents of all kinds,—greatly to the displeasure of his soldiers, who preferred to keep this gold for themselves. In the army there was at that time a chief named Maximin, a native of the most barbarous part of Thrace. At first a shepherd, he had become a soldier; and his lofty stature and strength attracting attention, he had risen from grade to grade up to the command of the new levies, whose drilling Alexander had confided to him. These recruits were for the most part rough and coarse Pannonians like himself, but wholly devoted to a man who possessed the same merits and the same faults with themselves, and on the contrary filled with contempt for the tranquil virtues of the Emperor. Furthermore, they were of opinion that the reign of Alexander had lasted long enough; that the recent war had impoverished his treasury, the remainder of which the avarice of Mamaea kept under lock and key; that, in short, there would be every advantage in a change of rulers, since the new one would pay richly for his dignity, especially if they should choose Maximin, who, without noble birth or illustrious record, would owe everything to them. Accordingly, they threw a purple mantle over his shoulders and marched in arms towards the Emperor's abode. At their approach, Alexander orders his guards to apprehend the rebel. They hesitate, then refuse, and allow the assassins to enter, who put to death the son and the mother;² or, as Hero-

ALEXANDER SEVERUS.¹

¹ Statue of heroic size, of Greek marble (Museum of Naples).

² In the seventeenth century there was discovered at Rome, near the Porta Maggiore, a sarcophagus which has been supposed to be that of Alexander Severus and Mamaea. The bas-reliefs below the figures of the Emperor and his mother represent: the quarrel of

dian says, "the parsimonious woman and the pusillanimous boy."¹ Some accounts make him die a cowardly death (March 19, 235).

Alexander had reigned thirteen years, though his age was only twenty-six.² He is the last of the Syrian princes. If among them we reckon Severus, on account of the influence exercised over him by Julia Domna, this dynasty had ruled the Empire more than forty years,—a brief space of time, which was marked by great events and bloody tragedies, and during which completely disappeared what was left of the Roman blood and spirit. But for the jurisconsults, who preserved the especially Roman science of the law, the customs and beliefs of the time would closely resemble those of an Asiatic monarchy. The Empire is inclining to the Orient, and will soon be lost in it.

Alexander's respect for Abraham and for Jesus, and the former relations of his mother with Origen, had rendered him favorable both to the Jews and the Christians.³ The latter enjoyed during his reign a profound peace and a sort of legal existence. In a dispute which the Church at Rome had with certain innkeepers in the matter of some public land, he pronounced in favor of the Christians. "Better," said he, "that this spot should become a place of prayer than a place of debauchery."⁴ He had been impressed with the manner in which the Church proceeded at its sacerdotal elections, and at one time thought of imitating it for the functions of state.⁵ Of this design there remained, as we have seen, only the invitation given to the people to denounce the

Achilles and Agamemnon; the imprisonment of Chryseis; Achilles preparing to avenge the death of Patroclus; and Priam begging the body of his son. This sarcophagus, represented on the opposite page, contained what is known as the Portland Vase, of blue glass with white ornaments, now in the British Museum.

¹ Julian, in the *Caesars*, repeats this censure.

² Or twenty-nine years and some months, according to Lampridius. There are doubts as to the precise date of his death. Eckhel (vii. 282) inclines to the beginning of July. To the reign of Alexander is referred an inscription of the Fratres Arvales describing a curious expiatory sacrifice because the lightning had struck down some trees of the sacred grove of the goddess Dia. Among other victims immolated *ante Caesarem genio d. n. Severi Alexandri Aug.* was found a *taurus auratus*; *item divis num. XX ververices XX.* These *divi* are, from another inscription of the year 183: Augustus, Julia (Livia), Claudius, Poppaea, Vespasian, Titus, Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Sabina, Antoninus, the elder Faustina, L. Verus, Marcus Aurelius, the younger Faustina, and later, Commodus himself, Pertinax, Severus, and Caracalla (Orelli, No. 961, after Marini, *Atti de' fratelli Arvali*, pl. 43, p. 167).

³ Lamprid., *Alex.* 22.

⁴ *Ibid.* 49. This was the very expression of the Gospel: *Domus mea domus orationis.*

⁵ Lamprid., *Alex.* 45.

crimes of candidates proposed for office. Lampridius asserts that Alexander desired to build a temple to the Christ and enroll him in the ranks of the gods, and that the priests dissuaded him from it, declaring, on the faith of the sacred books, that if he executed this project, the other temples would be abandoned.¹ This might be said to Constantine, but not to the son of Mamaea, since the Christians at that time were not sufficiently numerous to inspire such an apprehension. However, they profited by the tolerance of Alexander to build their first churches, which are shortly afterwards mentioned by Origen.²

Mamaea has also been represented as a Christian. A singular Christian was this Empress,— called on her coins the beneficent Juno, to whom the Senate decreed an apotheosis, and for whom a festival was instituted which the pagans celebrated as late as the fourth century!⁴ Like her son, she desired to hear about the new faith,⁵ and many others had the same curiosity. Eusebius relates that a governor of the province of Arabia requested the Bishop of Alexandria and the prefect of Egypt to send Origen to him to give him information concerning the new doctrines.⁶

The reign of this young and unfortunate Emperor, to whom, in spite of his weakness, we must accord a peculiar regard, was therefore the moment when the past and the future, the two great social forces, could come together without mingling, and live in peace until a transformation should be effected.⁷ A practical compromise was at this time not impossible between the Empire, now become disdainful of its old divinities, and a Christianity



COIN OF MAMAEA.³

¹ *Id., ibid.* 42.

² In *Matth. hom.* xxviii. Origen says that they were burned,— probably during the reign of Maximin.

³ Coin of Mamaea in the likeness of Juno. IVNO CONSERVATRIX. Juno standing, holding a patera and a sceptre ; a peacock is at her feet. Reverse of a silver coin.

⁴ Lamprid., *Alex.* 26. All her medals are pagan.

⁵ Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* vi. 21.

⁶ *Id., ibid.* vi. 19.

⁷ Zonaras (xii. 16) claims that there were many Christians at the court of Alexander : . . . πολλοὶ κατὰ τὸν Ἀλ. οἶκον ἦσαν τῶν Χριστὸν ἐπεγνωκότες θεόν. Mangold, *De Ecclesiis primaera pro Caesaribus ac magistratibus rom. precios juvenente*, 1881, thinks that in the first two centuries liturgical prayers for the Emperors and magistrates were said in the Christian communities.

which would have been respectful towards the established order,—the one accepting religious tolerance as its rule of government, the other, satisfied with the liberty allowed it, continuing peaceably to win souls, but not gaining power by violence; making conquest of the world by virtue of moral truth, and not as a victorious party establishing itself by force in the positions whence it has dislodged its adversaries. Unhappily, the revolutions of this world are not thus wisely effected. The spirit of Tertullian has replaced in the Church that of Clement, and in the State the violent will also succeed the peaceful. On both sides, force will be employed,—by Diocletian, in the name of the gods; by the successors of Constantine, in the name of Christ; and the Empire will be shaken to its foundations.

¹ This Medusa is carved on the outside of the famous cup of Oriental sardonyx known as the Tassa Farnese. It was found near the Castle of Saint Angelo (Hadrian's Tomb) or at the Tiburtine Villa, and is now in the Museum of Naples.



MEDUSA, OR AEGIS.¹

TWELFTH PERIOD.

MILITARY ANARCHY (235-268 A.D.). BEGINNING OF THE DECLINE.

CHAPTER XCIV.

SEVEN EMPERORS IN FOURTEEN YEARS (235-249 A.D.).

I.—MAXIMIN (235-238); GORDIAN I. AND GORDIAN II.; PUPIENUS AND BALBINUS (238).

AS the Roman aristocracy and the provincial nobles abandoned military service, the Barbarian youth entered it, and, reaching the higher grades, were masters of the troops and, consequently, of the Empire. Thus came to power a Thracian, in whose veins flowed the blood of many Barbaric races.

Caius Julius Verus Maximinus by his father's side belonged to the Getae; by his mother's, to the Alani. When Severus, on his return from Asia in the year 202, traversed Thrace, he celebrated, on occasion of a festival, the usual military games. Maximin, whose herculean strength had made him famous among his comrades, was matched against some of the Emperor's attendants, and overthrew sixteen of them in succession. This prowess gained him the honor of being at once enlisted in the army. Three days later, seeing the Emperor pass on horseback at full gallop, he kept pace with him on foot. Severus continued the race for some time, then proposed to him, fatigued as he was, to take part in a wrestling match. Without any hesitation, Maximin threw seven of the most active soldiers one after another: and upon this received the gold collar and was admitted to the guards. The new Ajax, who was as brave as he was strong, rose rapidly through the grades; but

would serve neither under Macrinus, who had killed the son of his benefactor, nor under Elagabalus, whom he despised,—two praiseworthy sentiments which should be set down to his credit. He re-entered the army in the reign of Alexander, who made

MAXIMIN.¹MAXIMUS, SON OF MAXIMIN.²

him tribune, with the rank of senator. The rest of the story is well known. Discontented with an Emperor whom his mother held in leading-strings, the troops were eager to have a true soldier at their head, and they made choice of the man who possessed all the physical qualities of one.—strength, agility, and dexterity.³ His

¹ Heroic statue, the antique head preserved. (Luni marble; from the Museum of Naples.)

² Statue of Greek marble, the antique head restored.

³ I make no mention of the extravagant stories of his strength and voracity. They are credible only on the supposition that Maximin was a morbid case of polyphagy, of which Létourneau gives such curious instances in his *Physiologie des passions*.

son Maximus, not yet twenty years of age,¹ was saluted Caesar and Prince of the Roman youth.

The extraordinary fortune to which Maximin had attained did not remove from his mind the consciousness of his own unworthiness, and placed him in an attitude of hostility towards all who possessed what he had never had,—ancestors, a name, education, and wealth. He dared not appear in Rome. This city full of

glorious memories, this Senate of which he was not yet a member,³ an assembly remaining still the shadow of a great reality, intimidated the Barbarian. The friends and councillors of Alexander, all his household, and among this number many Christians, were at once put to death; soon after, a conspiracy, real or feigned, cost the life of Magnus, a man of consular rank, and of several other persons.⁴ In the army were many troops of African and Asiatic origin,—Osrhoenian and Armenian archers, Moors armed with javelins, Parthians who had fled from the Persian dominion; and all were devoted to the dynasty which had arisen out of Leptis and Emesa. The favorite of the Pannonians and the murderer of Alexander was doubly odious to them; it was their desire to overthrow him and proclaim as Emperor, against his will, an ex-consul, whom one of his friends assassinated through spite at not having had the preference himself. This murder broke up the rebellion; new victims fell, and Maximin made haste to seek sanction for his power by gaining a victory over the Germans.

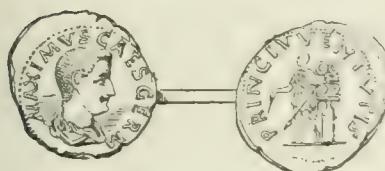
¹ Maximus was killed in his eighteenth or in his twenty-first year (*Capit., Mar.* 1).

² MAXIMVS CAES. GERM., around the bare head of the prince. On the reverse, PRINC. IVVENTVTIS. Maximus standing, holding a wand and a javelin; behind, two standards. (Silver coin. Cohen, No. 4.)

³ *Neque ipse senator esset* (*Eutrop., ix.* 1).

⁴ *Capitolinus* says four thousand (*Max. 10*).

⁵ From the Column of Antoninus.



MAXIMUS, CAESAR AND PRINCE OF THE YOUTH.²



GERMANS CONCEALING THEMSELVES AMONG RUSHES.⁵

These Barbarians made no resistance to a serious attack. Abandoning to the Romans their harvests and their wooden houses, which were at once set on fire, they took refuge in the depths of forests, whither they believed the legions would not dare to follow them, and in marshes through which they alone knew the way. Maximin, however, pursued them into these retreats, killed a considerable number of them, and sent to the Senate, with his letters announcing the victory, a picture representing himself as fighting surrounded by enemies, while the horse upon which he sits is half-

buried in the mud. He asserted that he had ravaged the country over a space of four hundred miles. Other wars, of which we have no particulars, gave him the titles of Dacicus and Sarmaticus. From Sirmium, which he had made the centre of his

operations, he commanded the line of the Carpathians, and proposed to penetrate as far as the Northern seas: this son of the Goths was desirous of crushing that Barbaric world whence he had himself emerged.²

A design like this, and a life passed in the camps of the Danube in rigorous climates, give the man a certain savage grandeur. But the senators left idle in the curia, the languid dwellers in Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch, who from the recesses of their luxurious villas could not discern the perils that the North concealed in its mysterious depths, and the populace, deprived of their wonted pleasures, were indignant at the affront offered to the imperial purple. Maximin was called the Cyclops, the Busiris, the wild beast; men openly desired his death, and in the theatre verses were declaimed like these: "The elephant is huge, but men kill him; the lion is strong, but men kill him; the tiger is terrible, but men kill him. Beware of all, thou who fearest none; for what one alone cannot do, many together can." The rude soldier gave back contempt for contempt to the effeminate revilers whose

¹ Laurelled head of Maximin. On the reverse, Maximin and his son, standing, holding a Victory. Between them, two kneeling captives. (Large bronze of the *Cabinet de France*.)

² In 256 he assumed the title of Germanicus (Eckhel, vii. 291). His victories over the Germans belong therefore to that year.



MAXIMINUS GERMANICUS.¹

hands could not grasp the sword, to these crowds living on charity and public games, who had never seen other blood flow than that of gladiators, while the Emperor replied by sentences of death to those who insulted him. Notwithstanding the efforts of the Empress, who strove vainly to soften his savage disposition,¹ murders and confiscations multiplied, and hatred increased against the Thracian who dared to say openly that an Empire like that of Rome could be governed only by the most relentless severity.

This hatred Maximin discerned everywhere, even amidst flatteries; and his cruelty only increased in consequence. The very persons who had aided his fortunes became guilty of having known his humble beginnings, and he caused these embarrassing witnesses of his obscurity to disappear. As there was safety for him nowhere except with the army, he gorged it with gold; and the public treasury not furnishing enough, he pillaged cities and temples, coined the statues of the gods into money, and confiscated the funds set apart for games and distributions. Citizens were cut down while endeavoring to defend the statues of their gods. A catastrophe was becoming inevitable, and an eclipse of the sun which occurred at this time was believed to announce it.

About the middle of February, 238,² an insurrection of peasants broke out in Africa. One of the most obnoxious of the agents of this fiscal tyranny, the procurator of the province of Carthage, had condemned many landowners of Thysdrus to fines which were ruinous to them. They applied for a delay of three days, and employed that time in calling in from the adjacent country their husbandmen, who entered the city by night, armed with clubs and hatchets concealed under their clothing. At break of day the conspirators with this band attacked the dwelling of the procurator.

¹ Amm. Marcellinus, xiv. 1.

² This period presents chronological difficulties, which have however been removed by Eckhel (vii. 293-95) and Borges (Sul' imp. Pupiano, in his Works, v. 488 *et seq.*), and especially by L. Renier. In the latter's memoir upon the inscriptions of the Gordians he establishes, moreover, that Capelianus was in command in Numidia, and not, as has been always believed, in Mauretania; that the Third Augustan legion was disbanded after its defeat; that the true name of Balbinus was Decimus Caecilius Galvinus Balbinus (no inscription had given it until that of Bouhira, recently discovered); that, finally, a rescript inserted in the *Code* (ii. 10. 2) proves that Pupienus and Balbinus were dead by the tenth before the kalends of July (June 22). In the reorganization of Africa by Gordian III. the Numidian lieutenancy was suppressed, and Caesarian Mauretania became, and remained until the time of Valerian, a praetorian province, governed by a legate who commanded the entire army in the African provinces.

killed him, and then hastening to the dwelling of the procurator, who was at this time in Thysdrus, they invested him with a purple robe, and, in spite of his reluctance, proclaimed him Augustus. Gordian was the person of highest rank in the Empire. He was said to be a descendant of the Gracchi; his mother, Ulpia Gordiana, belonged to the family of Trajan, and his wife was the



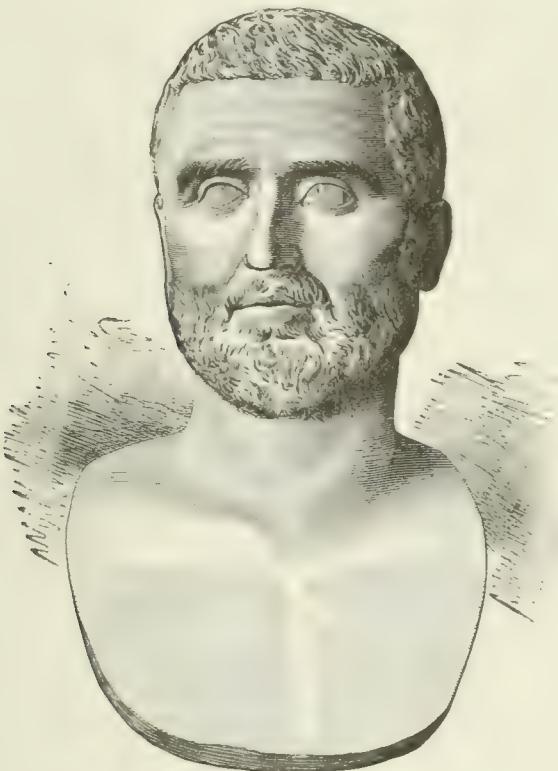
THYSDRUS (EL-DJEM).¹

great-granddaughter of Antoninus Pius. He was, moreover, a scholar, a poet, and a man of integrity; he had immense wealth, but he was eighty years of age, and — content with having passed through so many revolutions without loss of life or fortune — this assiduous reader of Plato and Aristotle, of Cicero and Vergil,²

¹ View of a circular gallery in the amphitheatre or colosseum.

² Gordian had composed a poetical Antoniniad. Capitolinus thus describes one of his palaces: "In their villa, which yet stands upon the Praenestine road, may be seen a tetrastyle

would have been glad to end his days peacefully. But the choice was not allowed him. Moreover, to touch the imperial purple, though but for a moment, was to be like him of old who laid hand upon the Ark,—his life must be the penalty.

THE ELDER GORDIAN.¹

Gordian accepted; and Carthage, which had not seen an Emperor since Hadrian, received with transport the new Augustus. He associated with himself his son, who had been one of his lieutenants, and immediately despatched messengers to Rome with letters for

temple of two hundred columns, of which fifty are of Carystian marble, fifty of Claudian, and fifty of Numidian; there are also three basilicas a hundred feet in length, and thermae, which are surpassed in beauty only by those of Rome" (*Gord.*, 32). "While aedile, Gordian gave at his own expense twelve spectacles, one each month, where gladiators in number from three hundred to a thousand were engaged. On one occasion he let loose in the amphitheatre a hundred wild beasts of Libya; another time, a thousand bears. At the August games he furnished to the populace two hundred stags, thirty wild horses, ten elands, a hundred Cyprus bulls, three hundred ostriches, thirty wild assess a hundred and fifty wild boars, two hundred chamois, and two hundred deer" (*Ibid.* 3).

¹ Bust of the Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 64.

the consuls, the Senate, the people, and the praetorians, together with assassins to murder the praetorian prefect, the pitiless agent of Maximin's cruelties. The false report was to be spread in the



THE YOUNGER GORDIAN.¹

city that Maximin had been murdered in the camp in Pannonia. The prefect, being attacked unawares, was stabbed in his own tribunal. In his letter to the Senate, Gordian declared that he would submit to the decision of that august assembly. Since the

¹ Bust of the Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 65.

time of the true Antonines the Conscript Fathers had not heard language like this. It gave them courage; and without waiting to see whether the imperial offices were really vacant, they decreed them to the two Gordians, father and son, in secret session¹ (March, 238). The people were for once of the same mind with the Senate: a ruler who scorned to come to Rome appeared to them false to all his duties. They rejoiced, therefore, at the report of Maximin's death, and welcomed with acclamations the Emperor whom the Fathers had given them. The revolution would have failed of its chief interest if it had been on paper only; a sanguinary reaction struck down the officers and partisans of the Thracian, together with the informers who had served his cruelty. Men of all ranks availed themselves of this pretext to rid themselves of their personal enemies, and debtors to murder their creditors. The prefect of the city perished in one of these tumults.

Meanwhile messengers had been sent out to communicate to the provinces the movement which had begun at Rome and Carthage. Despatches, written in the name of the Senate and the Roman people, called upon the nations to succor the common country, and acknowledge the two rulers who had just freed the world of a wild beast.³ Maximin at first ridiculed these new "Carthaginians," and promised his soldiers that this revolt of the Senate should give them rich booty. There was, in truth, nothing of Hannibal in the Carthage of the time; and when the Numidian legate, Capelianus, arrived from Lambesa and Thevestes with his legion,

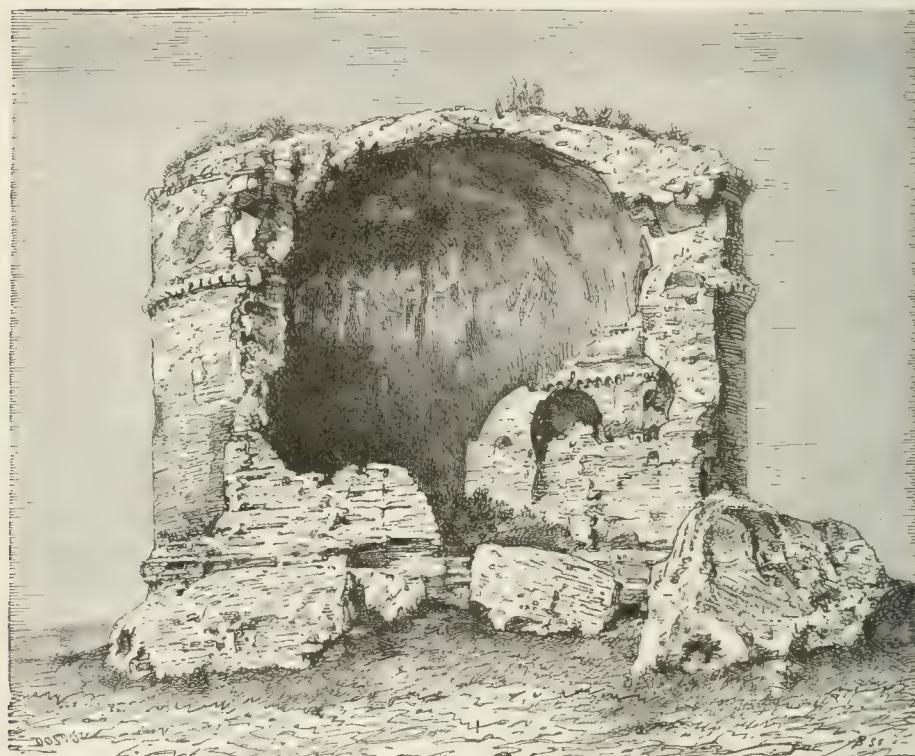
UNIQUE INSCRIPTION OF THE ELDER GORDIAN.²

¹ For a *senatus-consultum tacitum*, the secretaries and attendants — all, in fact, who were not senators — went out of the curia, and the members of the Senate themselves prepared the reports and decrees.

² From the restoration by M. Ch. Robert, in vol. iv. of *Mémoires de la Société archéolog. de Bordeaux*. (Museum of Bordeaux.)

³ The letter is addressed: *Proconsulibus, praesidibus, legatis, duicibus, tribunis, magistratibus, ac singulis civitatibus, et municipiis et oppidis et vicis et castellis* (Capit., *Max.* 15). The two Maximins were at the same time declared public enemies, and a reward was offered to any person who should kill them (*Ibid.* 16).

the Third Augustan, the citizens who had come out to oppose him gave way at sight of the Numidian horse, and in their precipitate flight crushed one another in the gates of the city.¹ The younger Gordian was killed, and his aged father in despair took his own life; the two had reigned a few days over a month. This news struck consternation at Rome. Embarked in so terrible an enter-



RUINS OF THE TOMB OF THE GORDIANS.²

prise, the Senate could not draw back; it was compelled to be either the victim or the executioner.

Ideas which later were more fully developed had begun at this time to germinate. In the time of Caracalla, Herodian had believed that a division of the Empire was possible. In the deliberation which took place after the arrival of the news from Africa, a senator proposed the appointment of two Emperors,—one

¹ Capitolinus (*Mar. 19*) speaks, however, of an *acerrima pugna*.

² From a photograph by Parker.

to remain at Rome and have charge of civil affairs, the other to be with the army for the direction of military operations: we have here the rough sketch of Diocletian's system. The proposal was well received, and the Senate proclaimed two Augusti,—Pupienus,¹ a military man, and Balbinus, who had won honor in the civil career. To render their powers absolutely equal, the office and title of pontifex maximus, which had never before been shared, was given to both; also the two Gordians were pronounced *divi*.

A great crowd had gathered outside the Capitol, where the Senate was in session. At the news of the decision a violent clamor was raised, especially against Pupienus, who, as governor of the city, had severely repressed those infractions of the public order that the lower classes so readily commit or excuse. Accordingly, when the new Emperors, with their suite, attempted to take possession of the imperial palace, they were driven back into the Capitol. As the Gordians were extremely rich,

THE TWO GORDIANS.²SILVER COIN OF GORDIAN III.,
CAESAR.⁴

they had many adherents, who had expected to derive advantage for themselves from the reign of the new dynasty. Of this family there remained a boy,—grandson, through his mother, of the proconsul of Africa,³—who was now in Rome.

Upon the elevation of his grandfather

and uncle, the Senate had given him the praetorship and the

¹ Their names were: M. Clodius Pupienus Maximus, and Decimus Caelius Balbinus. The latter claimed descent from Balbus, the Spaniard, the friend of Pompey and Caesar.

² Medallion of bronze of the two Gordians, proclaimed *divi*, struck at Aegae, in Cilicia, confirming the apotheosis decreed by the Senate: *Quos ambo senatus augustos appellavit, et postea inter divos retulit*. On the obverse, the laurelled heads of the two Gordians facing each other; the legend (in Greek): The Divine Gordiani, the venerable Roman, African, Augusti. On the reverse, an eagle upon an altar, and: The inhabitants of Aegae, Severiani, Hadriani, the neocoros city (having a temple of the Augusti), the navarchia (having a marine arsenal), in the year of Aegae 284 (238 A.D.).

³ An Algerian inscription (L. Renier, No. 1,431) calls him *divi Gordian: nepos et divi Gordiani sororis filius*. To the same effect, Herodian, vii. 27.

⁴ Silver coin, bearing on the reverse the legend: PIETAS AVGG. (Cohen, No. 73.)

title of Caesar, although he was but twelve years of age. After the African disaster, men were needed, and this boy was forgotten. But those whose interests were concerned did not forget



BALBINUS.¹

him; they instigated the mob, who by their clamor forced the Senate to renew the decree naming the young Gordian Caesar.

Rome had therefore three Emperors; but she had also civil war. Maximin had left in the city only a few praetorian veter-

¹ Bust of the Capitol.

rans; and this soldiery, whose insolence we have often mentioned, was always regarded with ill-will by the nobles and the populace. One day two of these soldiers, unarmed and as spectators, entering the temple where the Conspect Fathers were deliberating, passed beyond the altar of Victory,—a serious breach of etiquette. It

MAXIMIN.¹

may be that to this offence they added some insolence of demeanor, or possibly even some threatening language in their Emperor's name: the exact offence is not known; but an exasperated senator stabbed them both, then rushing out into the open square, held up his bloody dagger, exclaiming that these enemies of the Senate and of the Roman people must perish. The crowd fell upon the praetorians who chanced to be in the city; many were killed, and the remainder

¹ Bust in the Museum of the Louvre.

shut themselves up in their camp, which the gladiators belonging to the nobles vainly sought to carry by assault. The veterans made a strong resistance, and at times sallied out, making great



PUPIENUS.¹

slaughter among their assailants. To restore peace, Balbinus spared neither edicts nor entreaties; but he was driven out of the fray with sticks and stones,—without, however, receiving any intentional injury. The affair was a private quarrel between town and camp.

¹ Bust in the Museum of the Louvre.

of a kind frequently seen before and since, in military governments. The citizens finally cut off the water-supply of the camp, hoping thereby to force the praetorians to open their gates. The latter did indeed open them; but it was to fall upon the mob with levelled pikes, and pursue them into the city, where the fight went on. Assailed in the narrow streets by stones hurled from the roofs, the praetorians set fire to the houses; and while the conflagration raged, soldiers and populace became reconciled, uniting to plunder whatever the flames had spared. A great part of the city was thus destroyed.

Maximin now found himself in the position in which Severus had been forty-five years before; but he did not show the prudence of the African Emperor, and his army, having no supplies awaiting them along the road, advanced slowly. It is true that the disposition of the provincials was no longer the same: the inhabitants fled at the approach of Maximin and his Barbarians, and there were neither men nor provisions left in the cities which he entered.¹

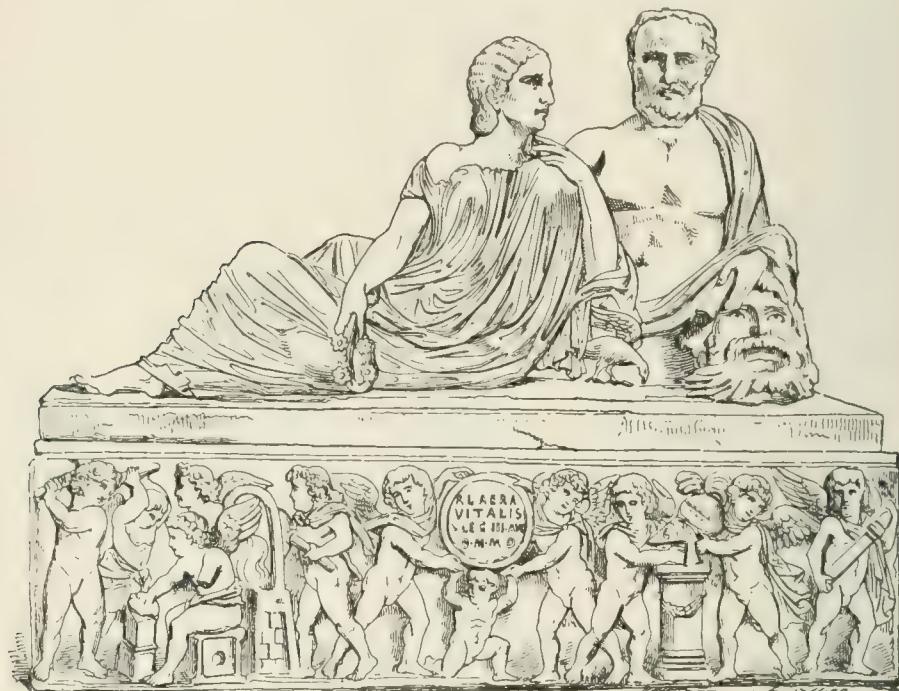
The Senate had time, therefore, to raise troops in Italy, to fortify positions, and to cut the roads. The fleet of Ravenna had carried off or destroyed all the coasting vessels, and allowed no supplies to arrive by way of the Adriatic for the army of Pannonia.² Twenty men of consular rank divided Italy among themselves, making it, so to speak, a fortress; and from Ravenna, where he had collected his army, Pupienus directed the movements of all. This city, the Venice of the Romans, afforded him an excellent strategic position. Thence he kept guard over Upper Italy and the lower course of its two great rivers, the Po and the Adige; his fleet gave him communication with Aquileia, and he covered the road to Rome. The Italians cordially aided his preparations: they felt that they were about to fight for the old renown of Italy against a fresh invasion of the Cimbri. The gods were made to speak: in Aquileia the auspices declared that Belenus promised success.³ Moreover, good news came in from the provinces. Most of them had declared for the Senate, and the legions which remained faithful, especially those of the Rhine, where Pupienus had been in command, sent detachments which enabled him to

¹ *Sublatissimis omnibus quae victum praebere possent* (*Capit., Max.* 21).

² *Capit., Max.* 23.

³ *Id., ibid.* 22; *Herod.* viii. 7.

officer a considerable number of recruits. In Africa, Capelianus, after his victory at Carthage, had pillaged the province to enrich his soldiers, to prepare his own way to the imperial power if Maximin should be overthrown.¹ But the governor of Mauretania



SARCOPHAGUS OF A CENTURION OF THE THIRD AUGUSTAN LEGION.²

defeated and killed him ; the Third Augustan legion was disbanded, its name effaced from the monuments it had erected, and the other troops were sent into Rhaetia.³ Maximin therefore remained isolated.⁴

¹ Capit., *Max.* 19. Cf. L. Renier, *Inscr. d'Alg.* No. 3,177.

² White marble, found among the tombs along the Appian Way. (From the Museum of the Louvre.) It represents eleven Loves forging arms, in allusion to the employment of the centurion : BLAERA VITALIS > [centurio] LEG. III. AVG. B. M. M. D. [Bene Merenti Mater Dedit?]. (C. I. L. vol. vi. No. 3,645.) "The artists of the Roman epoch were accustomed to treat religious traditions lightly, and attribute to Loves or to children certain occupations which in reality belong only to grown men. In this class of ideas the sarcophagus under consideration is one of the most instructive" (Fröhner, *Notice*, etc., No. 341, and p. 321; also Henry d'Escamps, *Descr. des marbres du Musée l'amp.* pl. 108).

³ This legion was reconstituted, about the year 253, in the reign of Valerian, whom it, with the whole Rhaetian army, had aided in obtaining the imperial power.

⁴ . . . *Orbam terrarum consensisse in odium Maximini* (Capit., *Max.* 23).

When he reached the banks of the Isonzo, the torrent, swelled by the melting of the snows, rolled broad and rapid, and the fine stone bridge which spanned it had been broken down. Here the army was detained for several days while rafts were constructed from casks and planks found in the deserted houses.

On the opposite side, some miles distant from the stream, was Aquileia, the real gateway into Italy on the northeast. Whether Maximin took it, or whether its inhabitants allowed him to traverse it with his famished hordes, in either case the great and wealthy city would be ruined. Accordingly, these descendants of Roman colonists resolved to make a desperate resistance. They closed the gaps in their walls, amassed immense quantities of provisions, and forged weapons and engines of war. The women, copying famous examples, gave their hair to make rope, —an act consecrated by a temple built in Rome to the Venus of the shaven head. Two ex-consuls—one formerly a *duce* in Moesia and a very able soldier—conducted the defence. There were but few troops in the city; but all the inhabitants enrolled themselves as a garrison, and the bravest men from the adjacent country had thrown themselves into the place.

All the attacks made upon the city were unsuccessful; all attempts to take it by storm failed; a rain of burning pitch arrested the advance of the hostile columns, and blazing darts shot from the balistae on the walls set on fire the siege-machines. Maximin avenged himself for these repeated defeats by putting to death the officers who had so unsuccessfully conducted the operations. Great indignation was aroused at these unjust punishments; provisions, moreover, were lacking, the army saw neither supplies nor succor come to it, the whole Empire appeared to be hostile, and the Emperor was not one of those leaders who give their soldiers courage to fight against a world.

The legionaries of the Second Parthica were the most uneasy. Their wives and children and all that they possessed, being left at Albanum, were at the mercy of the enemy. To save their own families, the soldiers murdered Maximin and his son. This Emperor's reign had lasted three years and a few days (238).¹

¹ Maximin was sixty-five years of age (*Chron. d'Alex.*, *ad ann. 238*, and *Zonaras, Ann. xii. 16*). The ecclesiastical writers (*Euseb., Hist. eccl. vi. 28*) place in his reign a persecution, which they call the sixth. *Sulpicius Severus* makes no mention of this: he speaks only

The army then demanded entrance into the city; but the people of Aquileia would not agree to this proposal. They let down provisions from their walls, requiring pay for them, and also opened markets at their gates; and the strange sight was seen of the besieged supplying their besiegers with food. Pupienus, coming



EQUESTRIAN STATUE OF AN EMPEROR CROWNED WITH LAUREL.¹

in all haste from Ravenna to this army destitute of a chief, received their oaths of fidelity to the three Emperors of Rome, and sent the troops away to their encampments, after having, as was usual, paid liberally the price of blood.

While these events were taking place the Senate had lived from day to day in the anxiety of a man who sees the knife at his throat.

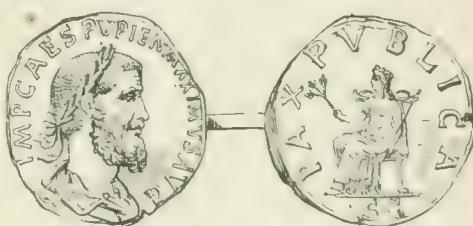
(*Hist. sacer.* ii. 16) of a few priests who were persecuted . . . *Nominalium ecclesiastarum clericos revocavit.* The persecution was probably limited to some local oppression; in Cappadocia, for instance, of which Firmilianus was bishop. Cf. Cyprian, *Ep.* 75: *Erat transeundi facultas eo quod persecutio illa non per totum mundum, sed localis fuisse ut per Cappadociam et Pontum;* and the Church has no authentic martyrs in this reign. Eusebius mentions not one.

¹ Guattani, 1786, and Clarae, pl. 967, No. 2,497.

Therefore their joy was as extreme as had been their terror, and they testified it by a great display of gratitude towards the gods and the Emperors,—to the former, solemn thanksgivings and hecatombs of victims; to the latter,—victors without a battle,—trophies, triumphal chariots, gilded equestrian statues, and, by way of novelty, statues carried by elephants.

When the noise of the acclamations had ceased, and the flames of the sacrifices died away, Pupienus calmly examined the situation, and found it still full of danger. “What do you expect will be our recompense for having delivered Rome from a monster?” he asked his colleague. “The love of the people, of the Senate, and of the whole human race,” Balbinus replied with simplicity. “Our recompense will be,” the old general said, “the hatred of the soldiers.” And this anticipation was well founded.

The two Emperors at first lived on terms of cordial friendliness. To attest their harmony, they caused coins to be struck representing two hands clasped, with the legend: *Patres senatus, amor mutuus*; also this: *Fides mutua*.² But Balbinus regarded Pupienus with contempt on account of his obscure birth, the latter despised his colleague’s weakness, and after a few days distrust sprang up between them. It was hardly possible that the combination devised by the Senate could have had any other result, or that this result should not bring about a catastrophe. The praetorians with silent displeasure endured “the Senate’s Emperors;” and their hatred increased with the homage paid by the Conspect Fathers to the men of their own choice. The soldiers feared lest there might be employed against them the same measures which Severus had adopted in the case of the praetorians of Julianus. In a *senatus-consultum* these imprudent words had been used: “Thus act those

PUPIENUS AND THE PUBLIC PEACE.¹SILVER COIN OF PUPIENUS.³

¹ IMP. CAES. PUPIEN[us] MAXIMVS AVG., around the laurelled head of the Emperor. On the reverse, PAX PVBLICA SC. and Peace, seated. (Large bronze.)

² Eckhel, vii. 305.

³ Two hands clasped, with the legend: PATRAS SENATVS.

rulers appointed by wise men; thus perish the rulers chosen by the inexperienced.”¹ This was an insult, and the soldiers took it up.



LARGE BRONZE OF BALBINUS.²

On an occasion when some public games had drawn away from the palace a large number of its usual guards, the praetorians hastened thither. Pupienus was anxious at once to summon the German guard.

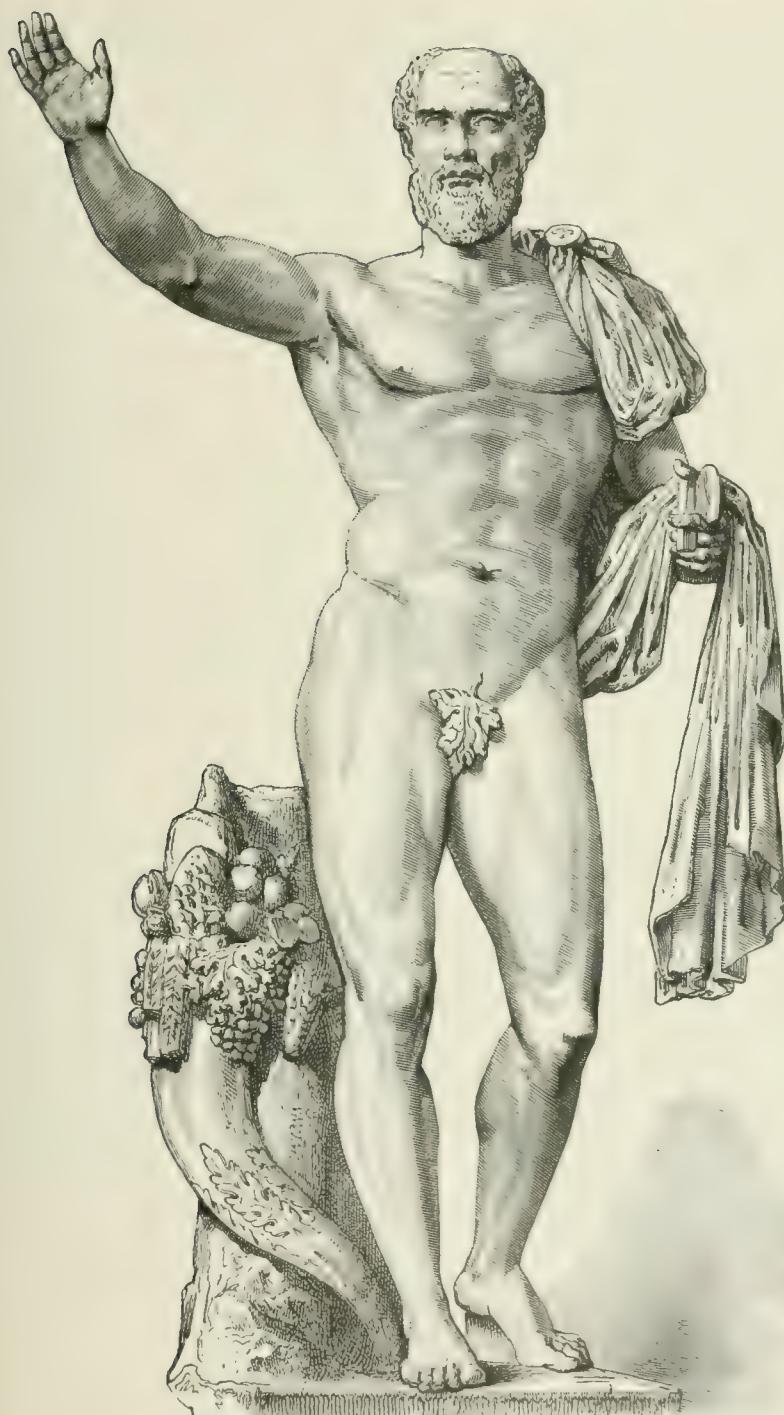
Balbinus, suspecting treachery on the part of his colleague, refused to allow it to be sent for. While the two Emperors were disputing, the praetorians forced the gates, seized them both, and dragged them through the city with every insult, crying: “Behold the Emperors of the Senate and the Roman people!”³ It was their intention to carry their prisoners to the camp and put them to death with slow tortures. But the German guard coming up, the praetorians murdered the two Emperors at once, and left their dead bodies in the open street (June, 238).

Less than five months had sufficed for the triple tragedy of which Rome, Carthage, and the camp of Aquileia had been the theatre. The senatorial restoration had lasted just long enough to give the soldiery time to recover from the surprise this audacious attempt had caused them, and could last no longer, for the Senate had neither material nor moral force; the power was elsewhere. From Commodus to Diocletian, the true masters of the Empire were the soldiers; and the evils of this domination were only for the moment averted when the army had at its head chiefs at once

¹ Herod., viii. 21.

² IMP. CAES. D[ecimus] CAEL[ius] BALBINVS AVG., and the laurelled head of Balbinus. On the reverse, LIBERALITAS AVGVSTORVM SC. Balbinus, Pupienus, and Gordian III. seated on a platform. Liberalitas standing; a citizen ascending the steps.

³ With the reign of Pupienus and Balbinus ends the work of Herodian, which, notwithstanding all its faults, is very useful for this epoch, so poor in historians. In the year 238 we find the publication of the book by Censorinus, *De Die natali*. About this time also Commodianus, the oldest of the Christian poets, wrote his *Instructions*, — eighty pieces of barbarous verse. His *Carmen apologeticum* belongs to the year 249. Gennadius (*De Script. eccl.* 15) says of this author: . . . *Scripsit, mediocri sermone quasi versu, librum adversus paganos. Et quia parum nostrarum attigerat litterarum, magis illorum destruere potuit dogmata quam nostra firmare.* The initial letters of the twenty-six last verses form these words: *Commodianus mendicus Christi.* Another of these acrostics, in barbarous prosody and metre, is found in an Algerian inscription (L. Renier, No. 2,074).



HEROIC STATUE OF PUPIENUS (MUSEUM OF THE LOUVRE).

able and strong, like Severus, Aurelian, and Probus. The organization of the Empire was such that it required for prosperity a strong hand always at the helm; but Nature is not so lavish of great men, and human wisdom had not by good institutions supplied what Nature did not give.

II.—GORDIAN III. (238–244).

WITHIN a few months six Emperors had perished, and only a boy was left, Gordian III.¹ The murderers carried him away with them to the camp. Not long before, they had made him Caesar through hatred of Pupienus and Balbinus; now that he was left alone, they proclaimed him Augustus: a ruler twelve or thirteen years old was the chief who suited them best. The Empire, wearied out with so many tumults, remained tranquil for a few years. There is mentioned only an insurrection in Africa, which was quickly suppressed by the governor of Caesarian Mauretania (240).² But affairs at court went badly. Gordian II. had had as many as twenty-two concubines; to guard this harem he had adopted the Oriental method of employing



GORDIAN III.³

¹ "He is said by most authorities to have been eleven years of age, but some consider him thirteen, and Junius Cordus believes that he was sixteen" (*Capit., Gord. 22*).

² L. Renier, *Inscr. d'Alg.* 99, and *C. I. L.* vol. vi. No. 1,090.

³ Luni marble; bust in the Museum of the Louvre.

eunuchs, and his nephew came into possession of this dangerous household. Ill-defended by his mother against them and against the freedmen, Gordian allowed them to be masters of the palace and the treasury, which they plundered at will. Their sway lasted till 241 or 242; at this period the young Emperor married Tranquillina, the daughter of Timesitheus, and appointed his father-in-law praetorian prefect.¹

This Timesitheus, who had filled with integrity important financial positions, and many times served as governor of a province

(*vice praesidis*), proved to be a man of much ability; and he thrust back into obscurity those who ought never to have emerged thence. One of his letters to Gordian shows the extent of the evil and the vigor of the remedy: “To Augustus, my master and my son, Timesitheus his father-in-law and prefect. We rejoice to see that you have escaped from the disgrace of the period when eunuchs and men whom you regarded as friends trafficked infamously in all things. Our rejoicing is the greater in that you yourself applaud this fortunate change, which proves also, my respected son, that you were not to blame for these abuses. It could not indeed be endured longer that eunuchs should dispose of military commands; that honorable services should be left unrewarded;

that the caprice or interest of a few men should cause the innocent to perish, and leave the guilty at liberty; that the treasury should be emptied by those who were constantly scheming to prejudice

¹ C. Furius Sabinius Aquila Timesitheus (*Spon, Antiq. de Lyon*, edition of 1857, p. 163). See his *cursus honorum* in De Boissieu’s *Inscr. de Lyon*, p. 245.

² Statue in the Museum of the Louvre; Parian marble.



THE EMPRESS TRANQUILLINA AS CERES.²

you against the best citizens, who were bringing the wicked forward and driving good men away, and trafficked in the very words that they themselves ascribed to you. Let us therefore thank the gods who have given you the will to heal the woes of the state. It is pleasing to be the father-in-law of a ruler who seeks to understand all things, and drives from his presence the men by whom he himself seemed formerly to be offered for public sale."

To this letter Gordian replied: "The Emperor Gordianus Augustus to Timesitheus, his father and prefect. If the mighty gods did not protect the Roman Empire, we should still be, as it were, exposed for sale by the eunuchs, themselves bought in the public markets. I at last understand that it is not a Felix whom I ought to have placed at the head of the praetorian cohorts, nor a Serapammon in command of the Fourth legion, and—not to enumerate in detail—that I ought not to have done many things that I have done. But I render thanks to the gods that you, whose fidelity is well known, have taught me what the captivity in which I was held had prevented me from understanding. What could I do when Maurus sold the government, and when, acting in concert with Gaudianus, Reverendus, and Montanus, he praised some men and blamed others? What could I do but approve what he had told me, it being also confirmed by the testimony of his accomplices? In truth, my dear father, an Emperor is very unfortunate when the truth is concealed from him. He cannot go out and learn it for himself, and he is obliged to hear what he is told, and to decide according to the information men bring him."

Timesitheus was not only renowned for his eloquence and integrity, but also, when the occasion required, he could show himself a good general. He caused the fortifications of cities and frontiers to be repaired, and collected vast quantities of provisions

COIN OF TRANQUILLINA.²

¹ SABINIA TRANQVILLINA AVG., surrounding the bust of the Empress. On the reverse, FELICITAS TEMPORVM SC. Felicitas standing.

in these strongholds, so that the armies could be supplied from them in case of need. The posts of the first importance were supplied with a year's stores of corn, salted pork, vinegar, barley, and straw; and the rest with supplies for one or two months. He examined the arsenals, and made sure that the weapons



PROVISION AND BAGGAGE WAGONS.¹

in the soldiers' hands were in good order. He sent away from the camps all useless persons, old men and children, who hindered the movements of the troops and consumed the rations. Discipline was the more easily maintained because he watched

with the utmost vigilance over the needs of the soldier, and even in the most remote marches secured the seasonable arrival of provisions. He also revived the old usage of surrounding the most temporary camps with a ditch; and visiting the outposts



COIN OF SHAPUR OR SAPOR I.²

often, even during the night, he kept watch upon the conduct of all. In a short time a man like this, able and devoted to the public welfare, restored their military virtues to the troops, and the army again became the formidable weapon that it had so long been.

¹ From a bas-relief of the Antonine Column.

² Bust of Sapor, with legend: The worshipper of Ormuzd. On the reverse, a pyre between two standing figures; legend: Chapouri. (Gold coin.)

The Persians quickly perceived what had taken place. Satisfied or exhausted by the first collision in the reign of Alexander Severus, they had remained tranquil until about the close of Maximin's reign; but new Asiatic dynasties do not at once abandon the tent for the harem. To consolidate their power, they need from time to time to give scope to the warlike ardor which brought them into existence. Ardashir again threatened Armenia and the Roman provinces. Upon his death in 240 he was succeeded by his son Shapur, or Sapor, who for a third of a century (240–273) remained the indefatigable enemy of the Romans. This monarch led in person a formidable invasion, which penetrated into the heart of Syria. He took the strong cities of Atra, Nisibis, and Carrhae, crossed the Euphrates, and menaced Antioch.² At news of this, Gordian opened the temple of Janus (241).³—a ceremony which seems then to have occurred for the last time,—and with a large army set out for the valley of the Danube, which the Sarmatians and Goths had been ravaging for four years;⁴ the Alani had even advanced as far as the neighborhood of Philippopolis in Thrace, where they defeated a Roman force. The Barbarians could not make any stand against the large army led by Gordian, which drove away these pillagers as it advanced.⁵

In 242 the Emperor crossed the Hellespont and moved forward rapidly towards the Euphrates.

The Persian cavalry offered no better resistance than the Goths had done; but the history of these engagements is lost. We have only a few lines in a despatch from the Emperor to the Senate: "After the many advantages gained upon our march, each one of which merits the honor of a triumph, we have broken the yoke already placed upon the neck of Antioch, and have deliv-

¹ Coin commemorating the crossing of the Hellespont by the Emperor. Reverse of a medium bronze of Gordian III., with the legend TRAIECTVS AVG. Gordian is seated in the prow of a praetorian galley, around which three dolphins are swimming. At the present day shoals of porpoises follow vessels in the Hellespont.

² Mirkhond, *Hist. des Sassanides*, French translation by Sylvestre de Sacy, p. 288.

³ Aur. Victor, *Caes.* 27.

⁴ The *initium bellum Scythici* dates from the reigns of Maximin and Balbinus, in 238 (*Capit.*, 16). In the first invasion the Goths destroyed Istria, upon the Euxine.

⁵ *Delevit, fugavit, expulit atque submersit* (*Capit.*, *Gord.* 26). On the tomb of Gordian are engraved the words, *Victor Gothorum* (*Ibid.* 34).



COIN OF GORDIAN III.¹

ered Syria from this king and his dominion. We have restored Carrhae and the other cities to the Empire. We are now at Nisibis, and, the gods favoring, shall soon be at Ctesiphon, if they preserve to us Timesitheus, our prefect and father, who plans and conducts everything. To him we owe this success, and shall owe others yet. Therefore vote supplications to the gods, and thanks

SAPOR I.¹PERSIAN HORSEMAN.²

to Timesitheus." The Senate decreed to the Emperor a quadriga of elephants, and to the prefect a triumphal chariot drawn by four horses, with this inscription: "To the tutor of the state."³

Unfortunately, not long after, the wise tutor died.—carried off by disease, or, as was believed at the time, poisoned by Philip (243). This Philip was an Arab of Trachonitis,⁴ son of a robber chief famous in that country, and for a time following his father's mode of life. Enrolled in the Roman army, he rose from one grade

¹ Engraved stone (sardonyx) of three layers, 23 millim. by 20. Pehlvi legend, of which four letters only can be clearly made out. Cf. Mordtmann, *Zeitschrift der deutsch. Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, vol. xviii. pl. vi. 4. (*Cabinet de France*, No. 1,344.)

² Intaglio of the Sassanid style. Perforated cone, 10 millim. in diameter. (*Cabinet de France*, No. 1,377.)

³ Capit., *Gord.* 27. An inscription recently discovered in Algeria gives Gordian seven imperial salutations (*Bull. de corresp. afric.* 1882, p. 119).

⁴ His name was M. Julius Philippus, and that of his wife Marcia Otacilia Severa. (See L. Renier, *Inscr. d'Aig.* No. 2,540.) According to Aurelius Victor (*Caes.* 28), he was born at Bostra, and gave that city its later name, Philippopolis. Ecclesiastical councils, however, mention both Bostra and Philippopolis.—the latter a town in the neighborhood of the former (Labbe, *Conec.* viii. 614, 675). M. Waddington has discovered the ruins of Philippopolis, where are yet to be seen a theatre, an aqueduct, baths, temples, and numerous public edifices. But the wall was never completed; Philip had not time to finish his work.

to another, until after the death of Timesitheus he was made its highest officer. Gordian appointed him to succeed in office the man whom he had perhaps murdered, and the operations against the Persians were continued. A great battle gained near Resaina, on the Chabaræs, opened the road to the Persian capital; but suddenly a mutiny broke out in the Roman army.

The new prefect had fomented it by intentionally disorganizing the service which his predecessor had so well established. Secret orders led the supply-trains astray and hindered the boats laden with provisions from reaching the camps. When Philip saw discontent springing up and growing, he employed emissaries to go about among the tents and the groups of soldiers and complain of Gordian: an Emperor so young was incapable of ruling the state and commanding the army; a colleague ought to be given him who would take the place of Timesitheus. The army, impelled by famine, placed the Empire in the power of Philip, and directed that he, as tutor, should rule jointly with Gordian.²

The friends of the young Emperor could not deceive themselves in regard to this division of authority imposed by the soldiers,—it was a master who was set over him; and the insolent behavior of

PHILIP THE ELDER.¹

¹ Bust in the Louvre, not designated with certainty (Luni marble). ² Zosimus, i. 18.

Philip made the situation perfectly evident. They prepared a counter-revolution; and when they believed themselves sufficiently strong, called together the army, as if it were a deliberative assembly. Gordian, ascending his tribunal, complained before them of the ingratitude of Philip, whom he had, he said, loaded with favors, and appealed to the soldiers for justice; that is to say, the deposition of the Emperor whom they had appointed. But the opposing party were victorious, and it was Gordian who was deposed. Here Capitolinus places a scene of unworthy supplications, in which Gordian ignobly descends all the steps of power, begging



SILVER COIN OF
PHILIP THE
ELDER.¹

first a share in the Empire, then the rank of Caesar, or the title of praetorian prefect, lastly, the grade of *dux* and his life. We have no more reason to believe in this young man's cowardice than in his great courage; but at twenty a man does not die thus. Gordian was killed near Zaitha, the city of olive-trees, where his assassin erected to his memory a splendid tomb, which a century later was yet standing.² Three other Emperors, Valerian, Carus, and Julian, were destined to die in these deserts.

Philip wrote to the Senate that the soldiers had chosen him Emperor in the stead of Gordian, deceased by natural causes; and the Senate decreed to the latter apotheosis, and to the former the imperial titles. The Conscript Fathers consoled themselves for their secret grief by granting to all the surviving members of the ill-fated family, once so prosperous, exemption from guardianship, legations, and municipal burdens (*munera*). This was all that they now had it in their power to give (February or March, 244).

¹ PAX FVNDATA CVM PERSIS: reverse of a silver coin of Philip the Elder; medal commemorative of peace with the Persians.

² Amm. Marcellin., xxiii. 5. The government of Gordian III. was remarkable for great legislative activity: the *Code of Justinian* mentions two hundred and forty ordinances of this reign. One of them is important: it granted to soldiers who had accepted, unawares, a burdensome inheritance, the advantage of being held to the payment of the debts only to the extent of the assets (*Code*, vi. 22). Hence the institution of the inventory.

III.—PHILIP (244).

INSTEAD of prosecuting the war against the Persians, discouraged as they were by their defeat at Resaina, Philip made haste to conclude peace, on terms advantageous to them,¹ and returned to Antioch. Eusebius, who is disposed to represent this murderer as a Christian, says that it was related in his time² that Philip, with the Empress, wishing to celebrate Easter in Antioch, the bishop, Saint Babylas, forbade them admission to the Church: upon which both humiliated themselves, made public confession of their sins, and took their places among the penitents. This popular belief in the end became historic certainty;³ although it is not easy to see what interest the Church had in claiming such a proselyte. It may be that this Arab had in his youth a knowledge of the Christian religion; that, like Mamaea, he had established relations with Origen;⁵ and it is certain that during his reign, as during that of Alexander, the Christians enjoyed undisturbed

PHILIP, THE EMPRESS OTACILIA, AND THE YOUNGER PHILIP.⁴¹ Eutropius, ix. 2; Zonaras, xii. 18, 19.² Ο λόγος κατέχει (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* vi. 34).³ SS. Chrysostom, Orosius, and Zonaras admitted them, and Saint Jerome says of Philip (*De Vir. ill.*), *qui primus de regibus rom. christ. fuit*. But these authors all lived or wrote after the penitence of Theodosius; and it was well to increase the authority of that famous example by confirming the rumors that had naturally grown up among the believers in respect to the public penitence of a whole imperial family whose toleration had caused them to be suspected of sharing in the Christian faith. At the end of the fourth century, a bishop, when that bishop was Saint Ambrose, might forbid an emperor entrance to his church a century and half earlier no man would have dared to do it.⁴ CONCORDIA AVGVSTORVM. Busts of Philip and Otacilia, and of their son. On the reverse: EX ORACVLO APOLLINIS; a round temple with four columns, and within it a statue of Apollo. (Bronze medallion.)⁵ Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* vi. 33) possessed two letters written by Origen,—the one to Philip, the other to the Empress. But he does not say that he finds there the proof that these imperial persons were Christians.

tranquillity:¹ but all his public conduct was that of a pagan emperor. According to the legend of one of his coins, he believed that his accession had been predicted by Apollo;² and the medals of Otacilia Severa bear profane devices,—sacrilegious honors that a Christian believer would have refused. On the other hand, at that time of religious confusion many persons were uncertain what they believed. The rational syncretism of the Alexandrian philosophers became an unreasoning syncretism in many minds. Thus a singular monument (though of much later

DENARIUS.³

SAINT GEORGE WITH THE HEAD OF A SPARROW-HAWK. (IDENTIFIED WITH HORUS.)

ROMAN WITH THE HEAD OF A SPARROW-HAWK.

date) represents a Saint George with the head of a sparrow-hawk,—that is to say, a hero of Christian legend is confused with the Egyp-

¹ Except at Alexandria, if we may believe Eusebius (vi. 41). But this so-called persecution was probably only one of the riots so common in that city, in which Christians as well as pagans perished.

² *Ex oraculo Apollinis* (Cohen, vol. iv. p. 201, No. 4; see p. 173). He caused Gordian III. to be proclaimed *divus*, and performed all the pagan rites of the Secular Games. There occurred during his reign an outbreak at Alexandria against the Christians, "which ceased only when civil war turned away men's minds" (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* vi. 41).

³ IVNO CONSERVATRIX. Juno veiled, holding a patera and a sceptre. Reverse of a coin of Otacilia.

tian god Horus.¹ The so-called Christianity of Mamaea and Otacilia was of the same nature, and even more vague than this.

The events of Philip's reign are almost unknown to us. The *Augustan History*, from Gordian III. to Valerian,—that is to say, from 244 to 253,—is lost; and to fill this gap we have only the meagre or untrustworthy summaries of Zosinus and Zonaras, who wrote, the former in the fifth century, the latter in the twelfth. They speak of a ceremony which stirred all Italy,—the celebration of the Secular Games on the thousandth anniversary of the founding of Rome (248).² To do honor to this great occasion, all the magnificence of imperial festivals was displayed, and the enthusiasm of the nations responded to the pomp of the ceremonial. The god Terminus having steadily advanced for a thousand years, the multitude might well believe that he was not now about to recede.

And in considering this constant good fortune through so large a space in the duration of humanity, the degenerate sons of ancient Rome allowed their poets to predict for the Empire a new millennium. But shouts of victory were

about to cease; a successor of Augustus and Trajan was soon to perish in battle with the Goths; another was to be a captive in the hands of Sapor; and already he was born who was to reduce the ancient queen of the world to the condition of a mere Italian town.

Although his son (M. Julius Philippus) was but seven years of age, Philip made him Caesar and (in 247) Augustus,—forgetting the fate of those imperial boys for whom the purple had been but a shroud. The new Emperor also placed all his kindred in positions of importance. His brother Priscus commanded the army of Syria; his father-in-law (?), Severianus, that of Moesia. Philip treated the senators with respect, and seems to have ruled moderately, without cruelties or confiscations. However, he confiscated

¹ Cf. *Horus et S. Georges*, memoir by M. Clermont-Ganneau in the *Revue archéol.* 1877.

² The thousandth year of Rome began, accepting Varro's calculation, the 21st of April, 217. The year was allowed to be completed before the games were celebrated (Eckhel, v. i. 324).

³ *Aureus* of the younger Philip, Caesar and Prince of the Youth (Cohen, No. 28).

⁴ Coin commemorating the thousandth anniversary of Rome. (Reverse of a large bronze of Philip.)



COIN OF PHILIP.⁴



AUREUS.³

to the state the palace of Pompey, which was the property of the Gordians, and had been much embellished by them. The Carpae, a people of Getic origin, probably resident on the banks of the



THE YOUNGER PHILIP.¹

Pruth, had come down into the lands of the lower Danube. It appears probable that Philip went in person to expel them, and made two campaigns in that war (245–246).² Upon his return to Rome the news arrived that the Syrians, exasperated by the severities

¹ Bust found at Civita Lavinia. (Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 69.)

² *Victoria Carpica, Carpicus Maximus*, legends on two of his coins; another, giving him the title *Germanicus Maximus*, announces some victory over the Germans (Cohen, vol. iv, p. 202. No. 5).

RUINS OF THE THERMAE OF THE GORDIANS.¹

of Priscus, had proclaimed an emperor, Iotapianus, who called himself a descendant of Alexander, and that certain rebels in Moesia had proclaimed another, Marinus.² Philip, in much anxiety,

¹ Photograph by Parker.

² We have imperial coins of two other usurpers who cannot be placed, Paecatianus and Sponsianus. The workmanship of the coins indicates the time of Philip or Decius (Cohen, vol. iv. pp. 229, 231, and pl. xi.).

consulted the Senate. Decius, one of the members of that assembly, who understood the value of the new Augusti, announced that these mock emperors would not be able to maintain their authority; and in fact they fell of themselves. Philip, however, believed it needful to send to the army of the Danube the wise adviser who had so well foreseen the turn affairs would take. Decius long resisted, apprehending that these legions, who had now for fourteen years remained obedient, would seize the first pretext to give themselves the pleasure and profit of a revolt. His anxiety

was not unfounded; he had scarcely entered the camp when the soldiers saluted him emperor, in spite of himself. The very men whom he had been commissioned to punish, had devised this scheme, which at once saved them from chastisement and secured to them a *donativum*.

COIN OF THE ELDER
PHILIP.¹



Decius wrote to his master that as soon as he returned to Rome he would lay aside the purple. The Emperor did not credit this promise, and marched against the army of Pannonia; an engagement took place near Verona,² and he was defeated and killed. The praetorians left at Rome murdered his son (249), a boy now twelve years of age, who, it is said, had never been seen to smile.³

¹ Coin of the elder Philip, with the legend: VICTORIA CARPICA.

² The *Chronicle of Alexandria* represents him as forty-five years of age at the time of his death. For results of the Gothic invasion, see chap. xvi.

³ Aur. Victor, *Caes.* 28. This tragedy took place early in the autumn.

⁴ Reverse of a bronze medal of the two Philips and Otacilia, with the legend: GERM[anici] MAX[imi] CARPICI MAX[imi]. Victory, standing in a quadriga, assists Philip, Otacilia, and their son to enter it (Cohen, No. 5).



BRONZE MEDAL OF THE TWO PHILIPS AND OTACILIA.⁴

CHAPTER XCV.

THE EMPIRE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE THIRD CENTURY.

I.—THE BARBARIANS.

THE Roman Empire, extended around the Mediterranean Sea, included the most favored regions of the temperate zone,—fertile lands with their abundant harvests, and beautiful cities, the earliest home of civilization. Notwithstanding the catastrophes which occurred periodically at Rome or in the camps, this region was a vast oasis amid the triple barbarism of the North, the South, and the East. Hitherto that of the South had not been formidable. The desert horsemen had not yet dreamed of abandoning the date-trees which fed them, and the wells of which they had drunk since Abraham's time, to scour the world for the sake of disseminating a new religion. Only the Blemyes, from time to time, disturbed Upper Egypt, and on the Arabian coast the Saracens began to attract notice,—witness the foolish story, related by the *Chronicle of Alexandria*, of lions and serpents placed along their frontier by Decius to deter them from crossing it.¹

The East swarmed with its countless myriads of men, formidable in frontier wars, but organized into great states, and by that very circumstance rendered incapable of those vast migrations which tread cities and empires under foot.

In the North, on the contrary, the great movement from East to West still continued which had begun in the remotest ages with the first migration of the Aryans. Not being able to encroach upon the settled inhabitants of Iran, the nomad hordes bore northward, passed through the *Völkerthor*, “the gate of the nations.”²

¹ Amm. Marcellinus says (xxii. 15): . . . *Scenitas Arabas quos Saracenos nunc adpellamus.*

² This is the name German authors give to the plain which extends from the last slopes of the Ural to the Caspian Sea.

and crowded the great Sarmatian and Germanic plains in a vagrant mass, but slightly attached to the soil, a pastoral rather than an agricultural people, and accused by an old author of holding the doctrine that might makes right.¹ — a view which they have always held, and still hold at the present day. They were most dangerous neighbors. Notwithstanding the ungrateful soil and severe climate, these prolific races increased rapidly,² and in the midst of their poverty forever turned their eyes towards the lands of sunshine and of wealth. Thrice already, within historic times, had they attempted to enter them.

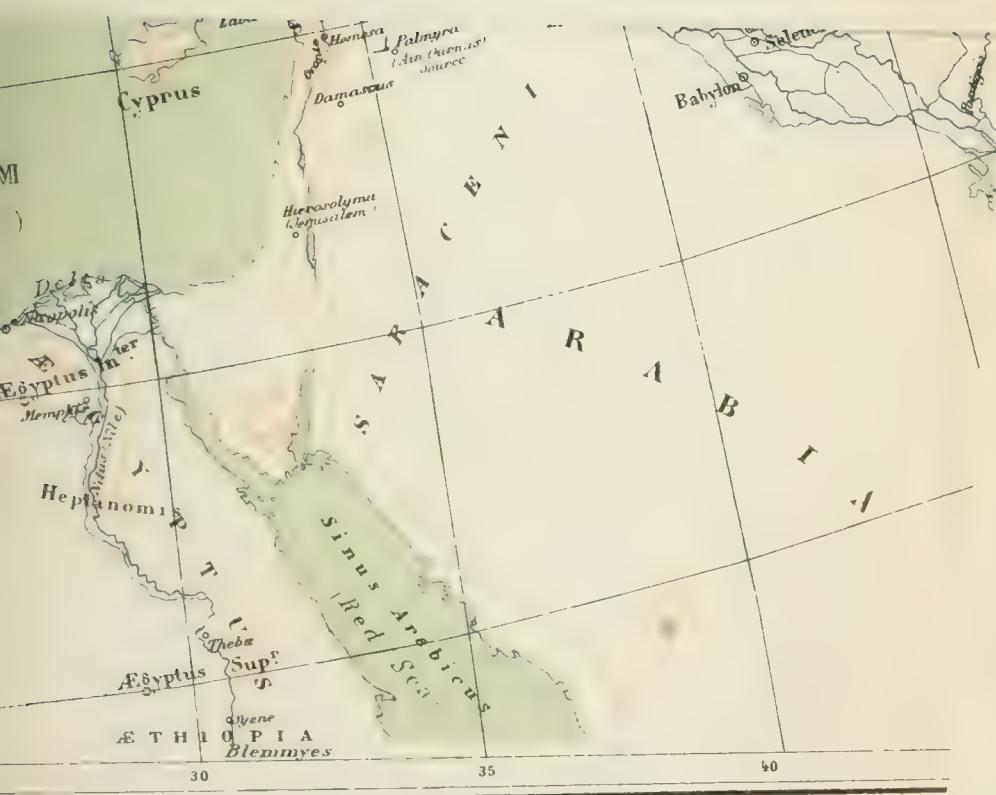
In the time of Marius, while three hundred thousand Cimbri and Teutones ravaged Gaul, Spain, and Northern Italy, others had fallen upon the Hellenic peninsula, devastating it from the Adriatic to the Black Sea. When, after the victory of Vercellae, Marius had set upon his buckler the head of a Barbarian with protruding tongue, it was to signify that Rome had strangled the Barbaric world in the grasp of her mighty hands.

But forty years had scarcely passed when this formidable enemy reappeared with threatening aspect; a hundred and twenty thousand warriors, the vanguard of the great nation of the Suevi, and four hundred and thirty thousand Usipetes or Tencteri undertook the conquest of Gaul. They were already in possession of its eastern portions, when Caesar drove the former back into the German forests, and exterminated the latter between the Rhine and the Meuse. During the reign of Marcus Aurelius an immense coalition again caused anxiety even in Rome itself; the Marcomanni came as far as Aquileia, and the Emperor was obliged to remain for several years on the banks of the Danube with the principal forces of the Empire.

Thus, in three centuries, there had been three formidable attacks, by the Cimbri, by Ariovistus, and by the Marcomanni, and in the interval between the great invasions, a multitude of combats and endless alarms along the Rhine and the Danube. This northern Barbaric world was like a human sea, whose waves, now violent, now feeble, were forever beating against the Roman intrenchments.

¹ *Jus in viribus habet* (Pomp. Mela).

² *Scanzia insula officina gentium aut certe velut vagina nationum* (Jordanes, 4).





With Caesar, Augustus, and Trajan, Rome had taken the offensive; she had crossed the Rhine and the Danube, and on the one hand penetrated as far as the Elbe, where she could not maintain herself, and on the other as far as the summit of the Carpathians, across conquered Dacia. But the Germans could not be grasped; neither in peace nor in war had Rome any hold upon them. From two hundred years of contact with civilization they had gained nothing. Ammianus Marcellinus still shows them, in the time of Julian, possessing no cities in their own country, and afraid to dwell in those which they had conquered. "A walled inclosure seemed to them a net in which men were caught, and the city itself a tomb to bury them alive."¹ The name of one of their great tribes, the Suevi, or Suabians, signifies "those going to and fro."² From deserters, from prisoners of war, from Roman traders who bought in their country the amber of the Baltic or the long fair hair of their women, they asked only the means of making their attacks more formidable. Nowhere, therefore, in all this vague and fugitive world did Rome find solid ground whereon she could establish herself, and thence command the entire country. Accordingly, after some vain attempts, she declined to venture into it again. Her policy in regard to the Germans was to cover with fortresses the Roman banks of the two great rivers, and to throw across this line of defence—

YOUNG DACIAN.³¹ xvi. 2.² *Die Schwebende* (Jules Sylvain Zeller, *Hist. d'Allemagne*, i. 81). Tacitus represents the Germans as saying to the Ubii: *Postulamus a vobis, muros coloniae, munimenta serritii detrahatis* (*Hist.* iv. 64).³ England, *Marm. Oxon.*, pl. 20, and Clarac, *op. cit.* pl. 834 B, No. 2, 161 J.

which extended uninterruptedly from the North Sea to the Euxine — pensions to the chiefs to win these warriors to peace, many intrigues in order to divide them, and a little gold to attract their bravest soldiers into the service of the Empire.

These precautions sufficed until the time when the migration of the Goths threw Eastern Germany into confusion, and brought to the banks of the Euxine those who were to play the chief part in the destruction of the old world.

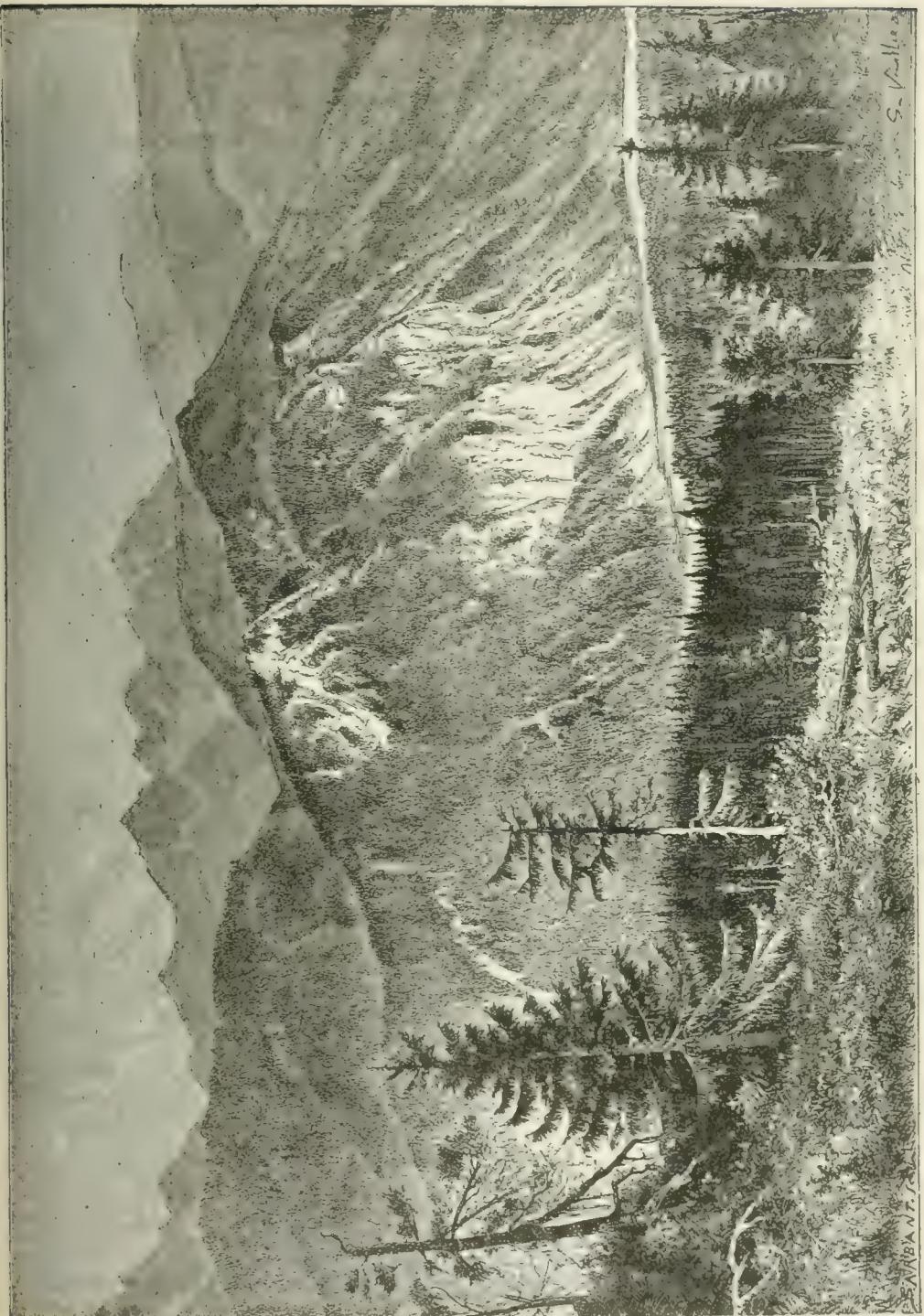
The great Gothic nation, a people who have left in the Scandinavian peninsula their name and the traces of their abode, had quitted it at an unknown but recent period, under the leadership of two powerful families,—the Amalidae (Amalungs) and Baltidae (Baltungs), who were regarded as the descendants of Odin and Freya, the Venus of Northern mythology.¹ These priest-kings—who, however, had no sacerdotal character, judges of the people in time of peace, and military leaders in war—subjugated the Vandals, who were probably of the same race with themselves,² and a crowd of other tribes whom they incorporated into their own mass, or drove back either to the South or West. The number of the Goths increasing³ with their victories, which drew to them adventurers eager for war and booty, the great mass of the nation was broken up into two bodies: one, the Goths of the East, or Ostrogoths, under Filimer, crossed the Vistula and subjugated the Sarmatians as far as the Euxine; the other, the Goths of the West, or Visigoths, settled around the mouths of the Danube. Certain tribes, set in motion by this great migration, went still farther westward,—the Gepidae into Transylvania, where the Romans now held only the fortified posts; the Vandals and Heruli into the Moravian Carpathians; the Langobardi into the upper valley of the Oder; the Burgundians into those of the Saale and the Mein. It is possible even that some of these tribes reached the southern frontier early enough to have shared in the war with the Marcomanni in the time of Marcus Aurelius, or that their pressure upon the Germans

¹ “The Baltidae,” says Jordanes (29), “are, after the Amalidae, the noblest of the Goths.” The Vandals had kings of the family of the Astingae (*id. 22*). Ptolemy, in the time of the Antonines, mentions the Goths as already established on the lower Vistula. The place vacated on the shores of the Baltic was occupied by the Slavs.

² Pliny, *Hist. nat.* iv. 14; Procop., *Bell. Vand.* i. 1.

³ . . . *Magna populi numerositate crescente* (Jordanes, 4).

VIEW AMONG THE CARPATHIAN MOUNTAINS.



of the South obliged the latter to seek their fortunes across the Danube.

By the success of this migration the Goths found themselves brought into the neighborhood of the civilized world. The rich pasture-lands of the Black Sea fed their flocks; the fertile Ukraine gave them more corn than they needed; the Sarmatian rivers carried their vessels down to the Euxine, girt by a belt of cities full of wealth easily to be captured; and while the Carpathians, which the legions had never yet ventured to cross, concealed the movements of these Barbarians, they had, in the open space between the extremity of these mountains and the sea, a gateway always giving them access into the Roman provinces. They remained, therefore, for the present tranquil and fearless, multiplying in these fruitful regions, whence their warriors could almost see the enormous booty in store for their courage.

Their national songs, which Jordanes had the opportunity of reading, but unfortunately did not preserve for us, related their exploits. They boasted of having subjected the Marcomanni to tribute, and the chiefs of the Quadi to obedience. Their rule, therefore, or their influence, extended from Bohemia to the Tauric Chersonesus, and their name was dreaded far and near. Their first appearance in Roman history is in the year 215. To attach to themselves the powerful nation whose hand was so heavy upon their ancient enemies,¹ the Romans subsidized the Goths,—which did not prevent the Roman provinces from soon having cause to dread these dangerous neighbors. While the body of the nation remained stationary, some adventurous band was always detaching itself, and at its own risk and peril crossing the Danube or the Euxine. Did the Goths essay, like the Germans in Trajan's time, to enter into relations with the great Oriental Empire? This we do not know; but it is matter of history that when Sapor invaded Roman Asia the Goths simultaneously fell upon Moesia. As early as 238, in the time of Pupienus and Balbinus, they destroyed an important city in this province, and in 242 Gordian encountered them here, where it is probable they had remained since their earlier inroad. He killed a large number of them, and

¹ Jordanes, 16: . . . *Sub cuius saepe dextra Wandalus jacuit, stetit sub pretio Marcomannus.*

by the aid of money¹ was able to rid himself of the rest. It was but for a short time, however; they had learned the road, and later would return in force sufficient to destroy a Roman army and kill an Emperor. In a space of thirty years (238–269) ten important invasions were made by them; and they rested for a century (269–375) only after they had driven the Roman garrison out of Dacia Trajana.

While in the northeast masses of men accustomed to fight under great military chiefs pressed heavily upon the frontier, about the upper Danube, the Rhine, and the lower Mein the Barbarians were organizing in a manner which gave their warlike enterprises that unity of action which they had hitherto always lacked.

During the first and second centuries of the Christian era history knows only the Germany of Tacitus; in the third that Germany seems suddenly to have disappeared, and another is seen. Under the double pressure of Rome and the Gothic invasion, the Germans had felt the need of a kind of union among their tribes, without, however, going so far as to establish actual confederations; and seeing the Roman frontiers so poorly defended, their warriors formed the habit of making inroads into these provinces which had been so long closed against them.

At the epoch of which we now speak, nothing remained of the social and religious organization which Tacitus describes, nor of the tribes known to him. We now hear of the Alemanni, the Franks, and the Saxons; later, of the Thuringians and Bavarians,—designations at once ethnographic and geographic.²

“The Alemanni,” says Agathias, “are a mixture of different peoples, which is signified by their name, ‘the men of all races.’” But the Suevi were the dominant people, and gave their name to the Decumatian lands, henceforward called Suabia. The Franks were also “the men armed with the *framea*,” or, more probably, “the free men;”³ that is to say, men of the Catti, Sicambri, Bructeri, Chamavi, Tencteri, and Ansivarii, who, without the

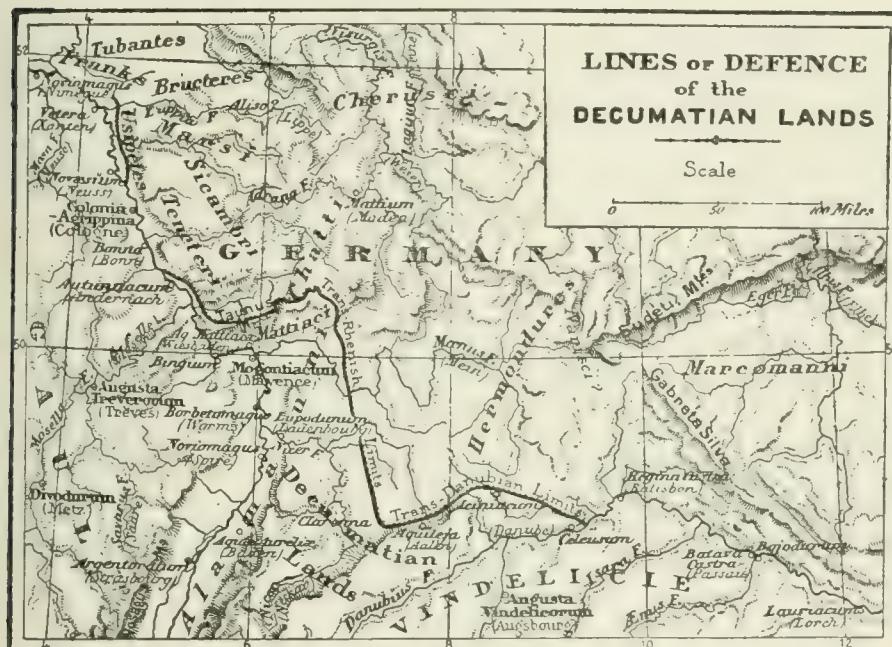
¹ See in the *Excerpta de Legionibus* of P. Patricius, Bonn edit., i. 24, the account of the deputation of the Carpae at Menophylis.

² In respect to this new grouping of the populations of western Germany, see Wietersheim, *Geschichte der Völkerwanderung*, i. 160–229, edit. of 1881.

³ Wachter (*Glossarium Germanicum*) derives the name from *Warg*, *Wrang*, exiled, banished,—which does not correspond with the idea of an agglomeration of tribes.

general participation of their respective tribes, engaged in war under individual leaders. The Saxons, "the men of the long knife," *seux*, recruited their bands among the Chauci, the Frisii, the Angrivarrii, and what remained of the Cherusci.

These peoples had no permanent directing council or sole chief, although all or most of the tribes belonging to one group sometimes united to wage a national war. More frequently, how-



LINES OF DEFENCE OF THE AGRI DECU^MATES.

ever, there were formed among them free associations of warrior bands who acted together for a definite purpose, and this purpose having been accomplished or else defeated, separated, until another association would be formed, after a time, for some new enterprise.¹ These disorderly bands were the more to be feared because Rome could have with them neither real peace nor open war.

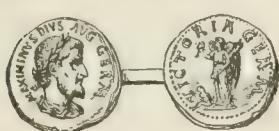
As the aborigines of America had their hunting-grounds, so

¹ G. Waitz (*Deutsche Verfassungsgeschichte*, i. 312) says: *Überhaupt weiß die ältere Zeit nichts von eigentlichen Bundesverfassungen*. This is true; but Sozomenes (iii. 6) shows the Saxons acting, in a given case, as a nation, and Julian was obliged to encounter at Strasburg seven confederated Aleman kings (Ann. Marcellinus, xvi. 12). But seven other chiefs of the same nation held aloof.

each of these nations had its territory to pillage: the Alemanni claimed the region extending from the Mein to the Alps, and from the Bohemian Forest to the Vosges, that is to say, the Roman provinces of Upper Germany and Rhaetia; the Franks, the provinces of Lower Germany and Belgica; the Saxons, the ocean and the British Islands.

Under Caracalla the Alemanni had invaded the Decumatian Lands; there they experienced a defeat which drove them back and kept them quiet for twenty years. Milestones have been found in this region bearing the names of Elagabalus and Alexander,—a proof that these Emperors were obeyed there.¹

In the reign of Alexander the Franks had with impunity scoured the whole of Gaul, killing and pillaging, until, satiated with booty, they returned to their encampments, indifferent to the fate of their companions whom they had left along the road. Maximin pursued these plunderers into the depths of their forests, and believed that

GOLD COIN.²

he had struck the barbaric world a terrible blow; upon his coins we read the legend, *Victoria Germanica*, so often imprinted on Roman money, but never true except for the moment, since the blow was always struck into empty space.

In the middle of the third century, then, Germany organized itself for the attack: in the East, an innumerable nation, ruled by a family who were regarded as favorites of the gods, and who knew how to prepare enterprises carefully and to conduct them with unanimity; in the West, confederations formed for purposes of war, and a multitude of chiefs who are incessantly flinging their predatory bands at the Empire, as *bandilleros* fling blazing

¹ From the fact that these milestones were discovered near Baden-Baden, while others, bearing the name of Septimius Severus, were found much farther to the East, Wintersheim (ii. 214) concludes that the Roman frontier had already been pushed back in the West under Elagabalus or Alexander.

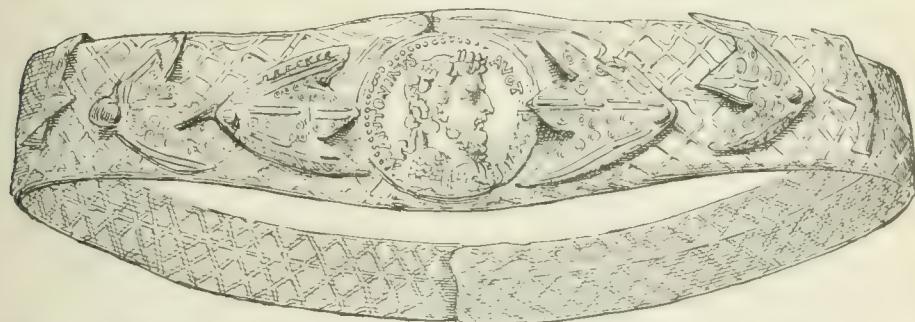
² Coin of Maximin, with the legend: VICTORIA GERMANICA. Maximin standing, crowned by a Victory. (Medium bronze.)

³ VICTORIA GERMAN. Gold coin of Maximin. MAXIMINVS PIVS AVG. GERM. Laureled bust of the Emperor. On the reverse, a standing Victory; at her feet a German, his hands tied behind his back.

COIN OF MAXIMIN.³

darts at the bull in the arena. Assailed by contemptible enemies whom he cannot reach, the powerful creature is confused, distracted; he bellows, and falls to the ground. Such was to be the fall of the Roman colossus; but in this case the *fiesta del toro* was destined to last two centuries.

The danger is increasing, then, along the northern frontier. All the outposts of the Empire which covered the main position are lost, or will shortly be so. The Decumatian Lands are invaded; Dacia has now but a few scattered garrisons, which will soon be recalled by Aurelian; a city which up to this time had been as the eye and hand of the Emperors over the Scythian world, Olbia,²—which the Antonines had protected, and where statues were erected in honor of Caracalla,³—disappears

SCYTHIAN COIN.¹

HEAD-BAND OF GOLD, WITH A MEDALLION OF COMMODUS, FOUND IN A TOMB IN THE CRIMEA.

at this time from history; and the other allies of Hadrian at the mouths of the great Sarmatian rivers⁴ are at the mercy of the Goths. Soon Rome will fall back behind the Danube; and even the great river will no longer protect her, for already Istriopolis, an important city of the Dobroudja, has been destroyed, and the Alani have penetrated into the valley of the Ebro. While the Barbaric world is making this step forward, Roman commerce has fallen back; her traders no longer dare venture into the lands of the

¹ Scythian coin struck at Olbia (*Dictionn. numism.* vol. i. p. 667, No. 1,268).

² Capit., *Ant.* 9.

³ Boeckh, *C. I. G.* No. 2,091. After the year 250 A. D. we hear no more of Olbia.

⁴ See Vol. V. pp. 331 *et seq.*

North. Imperial coins found in these regions are, with a single exception, pieces of date anterior to the third century.¹

Upon the Black Sea, the kings of the Cimmerian Bosphorus being no longer able to do police duty for Rome, piracy reappeared. In Asia the national and religious revolution effected by the Sassanidae was the cause of another danger, and these threatening events occurred at a time when the Roman power of resistance had diminished. The dark days were beginning.

II.—THE ROMAN ARMY.

IT has been a common remark that the nations included within the Roman Empire were old, that life had exhausted them, that their blood was impoverished, and that, following the common law of living things, they had reached a condition of senility,—the stage preceding death. These reasons, furnished by the convenient doctrine of historic fatality, may formerly have appeared satisfactory; at the present day there must be made a more profound examination of the morbid symptoms, which errors produced, and wisdom could have prevented.

And first, the danger appeared so great on the frontiers only by reason of the interior situation.

It is no Hannibal at the gates of Rome; the enemy who are approaching are only hordes whom the ancient Roman legions could have easily driven away. In the first century of the Christian era the Marcomanni, in the second the Dacians, were as formidable as the Goths are now, and the Germans of the West had been as eager as are the Frankish and Alemannic bands to invade Gaul or Italy. They were prevented from doing so because at that time the Roman world had as leader, together with an army still worthy of itself, a great man, whose reign lasted twenty years. After him another, for an equal length of time, watched over the Empire and the frontiers. Under the mighty hand of

¹ Note by M. de Witte to the *Hist. de la monn. rom.* iii. 116. He ought, however, also to say that the base coin of copper and silver at this time issued by the imperial mints could be forcibly circulated only in the Empire. Nations outside would naturally refuse this token-money, which had no intrinsic value. (See sect. iv. of this chapter.)

Trajan and that of Hadrian the Barbaric world bent the knee. Severus still held it motionless and timid. But now there were boys where there had been men; fools were in the place of the wise; reigns of a few days' length had followed those lasting for years; a policy of chance had taken the place of a policy of foresight; civil and military institutions were all relaxed; the government governed no longer; and the state tottered upon its yielding and crumbling base.

Montesquieu represents the Roman Empire at this time as a kind of irregular republic, somewhat like the former Regency of Algiers, in which the soldiery at will appointed and deposed the Dey. The remark is just; the Roman people never employing their electoral right, and the Senate, having suffered its right to be wrested from it by the praetorians,—the armies of the frontiers had now deprived the praetorians of this lucrative opportunity. The thing appears to us shameful, and so it is; but it was inevitable that the military power, which alone survived amid the ruin of the other institutions of Augustus, should dominate all. Contemporaries were not surprised at this. During centuries the army had been the Roman people under arms, and the recollection of this fact was not yet completely effaced; even made up as it now was, the army which defended the Empire was the only body which appeared



LEGIONARY FOOT-SOLDIER, STANDARD-BEARER.¹

¹ Found at Mayence, and preserved in the museum of that city. On the left shoulder Luccius bears a helmet with lowered visor; a long and a short sword hang at his belt; he holds in the left hand his buckler, and in the other the standard adorned with the civic crown. Cf. Lindenschmit, *Tracht und Bewaffnung des römischen Heeres während der Kaiserzeit*, etc., pl. iii. fig. 1, and p. 19.

worthy to act for it. Saint Jerome thought thus, for he compares the election of the bishop by the priests to the election of the Emperor by the soldiers.

Unfortunately the new army is very different from the old. It was the infantry of the legions that had conquered the world; but that infantry is now despised, and—a certain sign of weakness in military matters—the cavalry becomes every day more and more important. It almost equals the infantry in number, while in the time of Polybius, by a contrary excess, the legion had but



CARTS FOR TRANSPORTATION OF BAGGAGE (POMPEII).

one horseman to ten foot-soldiers.¹ Commanders-in-chief of cavalry are appointed,—Balista under Macrianus, Aureolus under Gallienus, Aurelian under Claudius II., Saturninus under Probus; and this title gave them great authority. The Barbarians served chiefly in the cavalry; and its increase shows how the foreign element was also increasing in the Roman army.

At the same time the camp began to be hampered by an enormous baggage-train. A letter of the Emperor Valerian shows what the commander of a legion required annually for his military household.—715 bushels of corn, 1,430 of barley, 13 cwt. of pork, 400 gallons of old wine, 300 skins for tents, etc.,² without counting

¹ Marquardt, *Handb.* ii. 584, and *Mém. de l'Acad. des inscr. et belles-lettres*, xxv. 473. According to General Rogniat, the proportion ought to be one in six; according to Napoleon, one in four. This varies according to the character of the country where the war is carried on. At the present time it is one in four in the French army (Budget of 1877).

² “We have intrusted to Cladius the tribuneship of the Fifth Martian legion.” (It will be noticed that at this epoch the commanders of the legions were only tribunes.) “You will give to him out of our private treasure for his annual salary, 3,000 *modii* of corn” (the *modius* being very nearly a peck), “6,000 of barley, 2,000 pounds of pork; 3,500 *sextarii* of old wine” (the *sextarius* being about a pint and a half), “150 *sextarii* of good oil, 600 of oil of second

the pay, which was 25,000 sesterces in good gold pieces,¹ at a time when commerce had only debased coin at its command.² We see further what onerous and sometimes singular dues they received from the state, and can estimate also what crushing burdens were imposed on the treasury by all these favors, often, moreover, doubled and trebled. In giving to Probus the office of Governor of the East, the Emperor Tacitus gave him five times more than the usual salary of this office. The *impedimenta* of the officers corresponded, of course, with that of the commander; and it is easy to see how, retarded by such enormous baggage, the Roman army, notwithstanding its numerous cavalry, could scarcely ever come

quality; 200 *modii* of salt, 150 pounds of wax; a sufficient quantity of hay, straw, vinegar, fruits, and vegetables; 300 skins to make tents, six she-mules, three horses, ten camels, and nine mules annually; 50 pounds of silver ware and 150 gold philips" (*auri*) "of our coinage annually, and at the new year 160 *trientes*" (a third of the *aurus*). "You will give him eleven pounds weight of pots and jars for wine, eleven more of kitchen utensils; two red military tunics annually, two silk-trimmed cloaks, two clasps of gilded silver, one of gold with copper point, a shoulder-belt of gilded silver, a ring with two stones weighing an ounce, a bracelet seven ounces in weight, a collar weighing a pound, a gilded helmet, two bucklers embossed with gold, a cuirass (which he will return), two Herculean lances, two short javelins, two reaping-hooks, four others for hay; a cook (whom he will return), two of the most beautiful female captives, a white garment of half silk, and another of Girba purple, an under-tunic of Mauretanian purple, a secretary (whom he will return), an architect (whom he will return), two pairs of Cyprus cushions for the table, two under-tunics without borders, two sheets, a toga (which he will return), a laticlave (which he will return), two footmen who will be always at his orders, a carpenter, a praetorian steward, a water-carrier, a fisherman, a pastry-cook; 1,000 pounds of wood daily, if there is enough, otherwise, as much as the locality can furnish; four shovelfuls of charcoal daily, a bath-man and the wood necessary for hot baths, failing which, he will be obliged to employ the public thermae. You will furnish at your discretion other things of minor importance; but you will not fix their value, so that if any article be lacking, he could not require its equivalent in money" (Treb. Pollio, *Cicat.* 11). See also what Valerian ordered the urban prefect to furnish daily to Aurelian during his stay in Rome, without counting what was supplied him by the prefects of the treasury (Vopiscus, *Aur.* 9). The French regulations furnish a general of division for campaign rations: 2,465 kilos of pork, 175 of rice, 48.75 of salt, 61.25 of sugar, 46.75 of coffee, 730 litres of wine. This allowance is for a year, and is furnished $\frac{3}{5}$ daily during the campaign, and in time of peace is suspended. But the Romans made no distinction between the peace and war footing, so that the enormous allowances enumerated above were permanent, while the French treasury supports this expense only in time of war. Under Louis XV. the French army had enormous baggage. The ordinance of March 9, 1756, gave each lieutenant-general thirty horses, and each colonel fourteen; and they actually had twice that number, with an immense train of carriages and wagons. Consequently these armies could not move. (See the *Comte de Gisors*, by Camille Rousset, pp. 182 *et seq.*)

¹ . . . *Cujus militiae salarium, in auro suscipit.*

² *Hist. de la monn. rom.* vol. iii. p. 143, No. 1. Probus received for his pay as tribune only 100 aurei, and the remainder in denarii and sesterces; but the total amounted to 28,000 sesterces, instead of 25,000, the 3,000 sesterces additional representing the difference in exchange, or what the tribune lost in receiving part of his pay in denarii and sesterces, instead of receiving the whole in gold.

up with an active enemy, who appeared suddenly, and disappeared as rapidly as he came.

In this army there were also a crowd of useless persons who on days of battle were not present in the ranks. It was regarded as an important reform when Alexander Severus reduced the number



ROMAN HORSEMAN.¹

of orderlies to ten for a legate, six for a dux, and four for a tribune.—a proof that this number had been hitherto greatly exceeded; and it doubtless again was so in later reigns, these restrictive ordinances being unpopular.

Two things still further prevented a general from requiring of his troops those rapid marches which had so many times enabled the Roman army to surprise an enemy and strike decisive blows. The soldiers had been accustomed to carry with them provisions

¹ Roman horseman, found at Bonn and preserved in the museum of that city (Linden-schmit, *op. cit.* pl. vii. No. 1).

for seventeen days, unless they were in an enemy's country. Alexander relieved his legionaries of this burden, and established their camps in such a way that they could receive their provisions without fatigue. On a march, mules and camels carried the supplies; but this required another train to supply the beasts of burden and their drivers: thus the line of *impedimenta* lengthened, and the army became very unwieldy. Moreover the order of battle was changed, and the soldiers' arms were modified. As from day to day the number of Barbarians in the army increased, it had become necessary to abandon the earlier organization of the legion, which required a mathematical precision in manoeuvres and much skill in camp labors. The quality of the soldier deteriorating, less was asked from individual experience, more from collective power. Caracalla had organized a Macedonian phalanx, and Alexander Severus increased it to thirty thousand men,—a dense mass, difficult to break into, but difficult also to move, and in which much strength was wasted. Lastly, these soldiers, so busy with making themselves comfortable, and to whom so much was necessary, found the weapons of the republican legionaries far too heavy; they required a smaller buckler, less fatiguing to their enfeebled arms, and the iron cuirass and helmet became an insupportable burden, from which they begged the Emperor Gratian to relieve them.²

It had been now many years since the semestrial tribunes had actively fulfilled the law requiring of them a period of service in the legions, and the senators were extremely disinclined to camp life. We read that one of them obtained from Commodus exemption in the matter of military service;³ Caracalla excused them all from it; Gallienus forbade it to them;⁴ and an old author is surprised at finding a young man of good family in the service.⁵

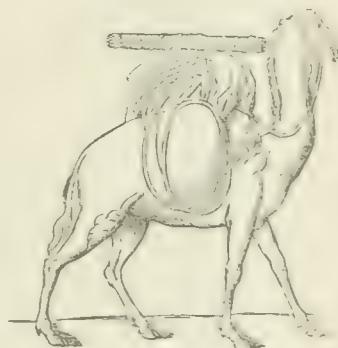
¹ Bas-relief from the Column of the Emperor Theodosius at Constantinople.

² Vegetius, i. 20. The phalanx did not last.

³ Borghesi, *Euvres compl.* v. 311; L. Renier, *Mé. d'épigr.* p. 18. Alexander Severus had thought of making a similar rule (Lamprid., *Alex.* 45).

⁴ Aur. Victor, *De Caes.* 33: . . . *Ne imperium ad optimos nobilium transferetur, senatus militia retinet, etiam adire exercitum.*

⁵ Id., Valer. 32: . . . *Quanquam genere satis claro.*



DROMEDARY CARRYING BAGGAGE.¹

The decurions of the provincial cities demanded the same privilege as the Roman senators, and the law, sanctioning this inside desertion, closed the army against them forever.¹ It was the whole aristocracy, great and small, which, in an empire founded by arms, and incapable of maintaining itself without their aid, now refused to bear them.



LEGIONARY WITH HELMET, ARMED WITH THE PILUM.²

and formed the great administrations of the early Empire,³ is still

¹ Constitution of Diocletian, in the *Codex Just.* xii. 34, 2, and maintained by his successors. Cf. *Codex Theod.* viii. 4, 28, anno 423, and *Codex Just.* x. 31, 55: *Si quis decurio ausus fuerit ullam affectare militiam . . . ad conditionem propriam retrahatur, anno 436.*

² Found at Wiesbaden and preserved in the museum of that city (Lindenschmit, *op. cit.*).

³ See Vol. VI. p. 197.

The effects of this change began to appear about the middle of the third century. The sons of Roman and provincial senators, who had hitherto filled the great military and civil offices, were replaced in the army by men of low degree. Some of these soldiers of fortune became able generals; but for the most part they were men of ignoble ambition, who, destitute of the patriotic pride of the early consuls, presently tore the Empire into thirty pieces, that they might each for an instant be adorned with a rag of the purple.

The separation of the civil and military orders, whose union had made the fortune of the Republic

further marked by the creation of a new grade, that of *dux*, or general-in-chief having no territorial authority, and consequently having no civil interests to protect. This measure, which is seen dawning under Septimius Severus, and became established in a general manner in 237 A. D.,¹ was useful, for it has endured to this day; but with the condition that the high military posts should be assigned only to men worthy of holding them, and the further condition that military honors should never open the way to high civil office. But Macrinus gave to two freedmen the government of Dacia and Pannonia, and to a former spy, who knew not how to read,² the consulship and the office of urban prefect. A few years later a man of mixed race, Getan and Alanian, a mere soldier, who had spent his life in the camps, was invested with the purple of the Caesars; and he by whom this Emperor was overthrown was himself the son of a blacksmith.³

This army, now forbidden to the nobility of the Empire, and from which citizens even were shortly to be debarred, was recruited from the dregs of the provincial population. Since the time of Septimius Severus a jurisconsult could say: "Formerly the military service was obligatory, and he was punished with death who did not respond to the call. Now we have abandoned this severity, because our cohorts are recruited from volunteers."⁴ But these volunteers were worthless wretches who had neither household gods nor homes, like those vagabonds with whom in the last century the recruiting officers of the French army filled their regiments, where they became the soldiers of Rossbach. There was indeed a method of recruiting, or, more properly, of conscription,—every city was required to furnish a definite number of men and horses; and this was a tax upon property. Both were obtained as cheaply as possible, and delivered over to the recruiting officer (*productio tiromum et equorum*). The following words are in the text of the law, under the head of municipal obligations: "The furnishing of recruits, horses, and other animals or necessary things . . . is a personal obligation."⁵

¹ See the *senatus-consultum* sent at this date to the proconsuls and military chiefs (Capit., *Maximin*, 15).

² Dion, lxxviii. 14.

³ Pupienus was, it is said, the son of a blacksmith or a wheelwright.

⁴ Arrius Menander, *Digest*, xlxi. 16, 4, sec. 10.

⁵ Arcadius Charisius, in the *Digest*, I. 4, 18, sec 13.

Besides these soldiers furnished by contract, there were others who were an actual danger to the state,—those obtained from among the nations whom the army had to fight. Aurelius Victor, speaking of the legions of that time, writes: “The soldiers—the Barbarians, I had almost said.”¹ When Aurelian was intrusted with the defence of Thrace, the Emperor gave him a legion; but also, three hundred Ituraean archers, six hundred Armenians, one hundred and fifty Arabs, two hundred Saracens, four hundred men of Mesopotamia, and eight hundred *cataphracti* (men clad in mail), who were to come from the same region; and to show him that he could count on capable subordinates, Valerian wrote to him: “You will have with you Hartomund, Haldegast, Hildemund, and Cariovix,”²—all Germans. At the battle of Emesa, in 272, one of the best generals in the army, Pompeianus,³ was a Frank. The Barbaric origin of many others is concealed under Roman names. These Lembazii, Riparenses, Castriani, and Dacisci, who at that time formed the entire garrison of Rome, were certainly not all men of the old provinces.⁴ The Roman army was composed, therefore, in the different ages of its history, in the following manner,—first, of citizens; then, of Italians; then, of provincials; and now the Barbarians are entering: it is a descending scale.

Following the able policy of the Republican Senate, the Emperors, in concluding a treaty with the Goths or Vandals, stipulated that the children of the Barbarians should be given up as hostages, and received them, both boys and girls, into the noblest houses in Rome. The boys were educated like the Roman youth, and the girls were married to Roman officers, in the intention that these wives should keep their husbands informed of what was going on over the frontier. Hunila was of royal blood among the Goths: Aurelian gave her a handsome dowry and married her to Bonosus, one of his generals,—a valiant boon companion, who in a battle of cups defeated all the Barbarians and plucked from them their most secret thoughts.⁵

¹ Aur. Victor, *De Curs. 37: Militibus ac pacie barbaris.* After defeating an army of Goths, Claudio II. selected a number to fill the gaps in his cohorts. Ten years later Probus incorporated sixteen thousand Germans into his legions; all the Emperors did the same. Under Theodosius Barbarians were more numerous than Romans in the Roman army.

² Vopiscus, *Aur.* 11.

⁴ Vopiscus, *Aur.* 38.

³ Saint Jerome, *Chron. ad ann. 272.*

⁵ *Id., Bon.* 14.

Certainly there is no heroism in military virtues like these: but there was not a hero left under the standards. In the time of Alexander Severus the Syrian legions declined to fight against the Persians,¹ and at Trebizond and Chalcedon, Romans more numerous than the Goths fled before them.² Finally, from among these men who resembled the soldiers of Caesar in nothing except their costume, went out deserters who carried over to the enemy the secret of Roman tactics, drilled his troops, forged his weapons, built his ships, even constructed for him engines of war wherewith to attack fortresses. At the siege of Philippopolis the Goths made use of all the engineering contrivances known to the Romans of the time.³ Implacable, as traitors are to those whom they have betrayed, these men incited invasions, showed the way, and took the lead in pillage, while their

ITURAEAN ARCHER.⁴

¹ Dion, lxxx. 4. He adds that they were disposed to go over to the enemy.

² See, in Zosimus, the invasion of Asia Minor by the Goths and Scythians in the time of Valerian. Jordanes says (16) of deserting legionaries in the time of Decius and of Philip: . . . *Milites ad regis Gothorum auxillium contingerunt*. A multitude of the soldiers of Niger had gone over to the Parthians; and to leave the door open for their return, Severus had modified the terrible penalties denounced by law against deserters.

³ See Dexippus, No. 2, in vol. iii. p. 678, of the *Fragmentsa historicorum Graecorum* (Didot).

⁴ The inscription is as follows: MONIBVS JEROMBALI F[ilius] MIL[ites] COH[ortis] ITURAEOR[um] ANN[orum] L. STIP[endiorum] XVI H[ic] S[itus] E[st]. Monument

comrades remaining under the standards made and unmade emperors. It was a deserter who, in 259, guided the Goths in the conquest of Bithynia, and it was perhaps a military revolt which gave up to the Persians the Emperor Valerian.¹

Thus we see the standard is lowered among the soldiers, as it is among the officers, and consequently in the government. And whose is the fault? It is the fault of the citizens of every rank, who will no longer endure the military service, and of the rulers, who know not how to compel them to it. We have already remarked that the appearance of an excellent military organization always marks the advent of a new dominion, for the reason that the army in many respects sums up in itself the civilization of a people. The empires of Persia and of Athens, of Thebes and of Macedon, of Carthage and of Rome, succeed each other in the order of the improvements made in military institutions. At the period with which we are now occupied these improvements had reached a limit which could be passed only by the aid of sciences unknown to antiquity, and centuries were yet to pass before these new sciences should be discovered. The Greek genius, which was above all speculative, had been able to create mathematics and astronomy, and to begin mechanics and natural history; but mathematics alone have not—as chemistry and physics have—the virtue of leading man to the control of the material world; and these poets, these philosophers, these artists, who had made the civilization of the old world, were not able to arm it with forces conquered from Nature. To protect itself against the Barbarians the Roman world had, therefore, means scarcely, if at all, superior to those which the Barbarians employed. When, by the pensions which the imperial government paid and by the commerce which the Roman traders carried on in time of peace, by the booty snatched from the provinces and by the lessons which deserters taught them, the Goths, the Alemanni, and the Franks had obtained what was necessary for the development of their metallurgic industries, they were able to give themselves an armament almost as formidable as that which the Romans possessed. In courage they had the superiority; and their religion—like that which Mahomet gave to the found at Mayence; now in the museum of that city. Cf. Lindenschmit, *Tracht*, etc., pl. v. No. 3, and p. 22.

¹ Zonaras, xii. 23.

Barbarians of the South—inspired them with a martial ardor which the Romans no longer possessed. On the field of battle the legions had the advantage of discipline, of a better order, and of some remaining traditions of military art; and this superiority would have secured to the Empire constant victories if these legions, which for two centuries had been the strength of the state and the support of the Emperor, had not now become the scourge of the one and the terror of the other. Accordingly, the chief care of the succeeding rulers will be to put an end to barrack-revolts by a violent reaction against the military order. To obtain protection from the continual attacks of the soldiery they will effect an administrative revolution which will appear to give themselves more security, but will not increase the safety of the Empire; they will divide the army, in order to have less reason to fear it, and they will compose it of Barbarians, in the hope that these foreigners will be more docile.

III.—THE ADMINISTRATION.

IN the age preceding, the nobles were the governing class; a regular and slow ascending movement constantly replaced the Roman aristocracy, which was becoming exhausted, by a provincial aristocracy full of life and experience. The latter obtained seats in the Senate as rapidly as its members, by their services in the cities and the legions, gained the notice of the Emperor; and the sons of these senators, before succeeding their fathers in the curiae, were prepared for their high office by an excellent administrative education. Revolutions had now changed this favorable condition of affairs.

Enfeebled by the institution of Hadrian's *consilium principis*, and despoiled of its last powers by the imperial council of Alexander Severus, the Senate had nothing to do in the state; accordingly, it mattered little that Caracalla called Egyptians and Palmyrenes to sit with the Conspect Fathers;¹ Elagabalus, Alexander Severus and Philip, Syrians and Arabs;² and Maximin, Thracians.

¹ De Vogüé, *Inscr. araméennes de Palmyre*, Nos. 20-22.

² Zosimus (i. 19) says that Philip placed all his relatives in the higher offices; and we may note that Philip was the son of a Bedouin, a robber-chief.

The higher grades in the army, the really important offices in the state, even the imperial dignity, being the prey of soldiers of fortune, the Senate and the public offices were filled with the friends of the Emperor, who selected them from the society in which he himself had lived. From this it resulted that the administration, as well as the army, was recruited from the lower strata of the population; that the worth of the men who influenced public affairs diminished; and that life everywhere fell to a lower level.

The movement of concentration which had taken place in Rome in the last centuries of the Republic went on in the provincial cities. The number of the *humiliores* increased, that of the *honestiores* diminished; and in the provincial cities are seen only two classes,—the decurions and the common people. The latter lost their last rights, even the comitia falling into desuetude; almost everywhere the curia, instead of the popular assembly, was the electoral body,¹ and the office of decurion had become hereditary.²

But the elections had become very onerous to the persons elected. In Pliny's time to enter a municipal senate did not involve great expense; at the period of which we are now speaking a perpetual flamen paid 82,000 sesterces for his office.³ Of this he expended 30,000 for a statue to adorn the city; 20,000 for the required gift to the decurions; and he promised the people scenic games, with a distribution of money. Prodigalities like these were possible to the rich only; consequently it was inevitable that many should seek in their office the means of indemnifying themselves, as the republican proconsuls had been wont to repair, in a year of provincial government, their fortunes ruined by an election in the Forum. The Empire had put an end to this colossal plundering; and it was obliged also to arrest the extortions of the municipal magistrates.⁴ But to do this, the home government found it

¹ Africa still held electoral comitia in the time of Constantine (*Code Theod.* xii. 15, 1); and Julian, in the *Misagymnē*, speaks in the case of Antioch of senators elected by the people, and later of municipal judges who had no regard for justice.

² See in the *Digest*, l. 2, the section *De Filiis decurionum*.

³ This amount was paid into the municipal treasury *ob honorem flaminii* (L. Renier, *Bull. de l'Acad. des inscr.*, June, 1878; inscription of the time of Elagabalus, recently found at Philippeville). This, it is true, is an individual instance.

⁴ These were of very early date. Cicero (*Ad Att.* vi. 2) avers that he had made those of Cilicia restore their ill-gotten gains; and he adds that these restitutions enabled the province to pay the arrears of its taxes.

necessary to administer the provinces which formerly it had been contented with ruling.

The time of the family of the Severi is that of the most renowned jurisconsults of Rome. Now these incomparable logicians sought, on their part, to establish everywhere and in all cases the idea of the rights of the state.—which rights had been so extensive in the ancient republics. Yielding to the influence of these eminent men, as well as to the social necessity of which we have just spoken, the Emperors encroached upon the municipal liberties: and this ever-increasing interference of the imperial agents, which the citizens themselves solicited or made needful, impaired and destroyed the vitality of the municipal rule. The finances of the cities are now in the hands of the Emperor's curators; the irenarchs, appointed to maintain public order, must have the approbation of the Emperor's representative before entering upon their office;¹ new taxes are levied, public works are executed, only with the authorization of the governor, who annuls the decisions of the local senate when they are displeasing to him (*ambitiosa decretata*), and the elections are made, subject to his approval, when he does not himself directly appoint the candidates.² The duumvirs act as judges only in cases where a small sum is involved, and the practice of appeal to the Roman magistrate will have soon reduced the duumviral jurisdiction to nothing more than the equivalent of a French *justice de paix*.³ Thus, municipal honors losing their dignity, the obligations they impose seem more onerous, and, through different reasons, pagans and Christians alike avoid them. But the government, already seeking to render the decurions responsible for the payment of the land-tax,⁴ watches carefully to see that the provincial

¹ . . . Cum a praeside ex inquisitione eligatur (*Digest*, I. 8, 9, sect. 7). See (*ibid.* xxii. 1, 33) the rights which Ulpian attributes to the *praeses* in respect to the financial administration of the city: . . . Qui disciplinae publicae et corrugendis moribus praeficitur (*ibid.* I. 4, 18, sect. 7) . . . A decurionibus, iudicio praesidum . . . nominentur (*Code*, x. 75). An ordinance of Alexander Severus gives the governor of a province the right to annul the election of a decurion elected by persons unfriendly to the latter for the purpose of imposing ruinous expenses upon him.

² *Digest*, xlix. 4, sects. 3, 4. "When he writes to the Senate," says Ulpian, "*ut Gaium Seum ercent magistratum*, it is advice rather than command." But the advice was as potent as an order.

³ [The *justice de paix* decides debts not above a hundred francs. — ED.]

⁴ Many sentences in the *Digest* show this tendency from the beginning of the third century; but it is not until the time of Constantine that we find this system completely established. For the municipal organization of the first century, see in Vol. VI. of this work the whole of

senates are kept full; a man seeking to escape this duty by taking refuge in another city, is brought back;¹ or, if he cannot be found, his property is confiscated for the use of the curia. A criminal sentence does not free a man from the duty of service as decurion; on the expiration of his term of punishment he returns into the senate.² When it was a question of receipts, the treasury had no scruples.

The government, which with one hand chained the refractory to municipal honors, with the other threw back privileged persons into the taxable class, in order to make sure that its share in the net revenue of the cities should not be lessened.³ In the time of their prosperity these cities had multiplied exemptions from the *munera*, of which the burden in the general impoverishment now fell heavily upon the tax-payers. The number of physicians, rhetoricians, and grammarians enjoying immunity was reduced,⁴ and the citizen who had been exempted from the *munera* because of his poverty was made taxable, notwithstanding his age, if fortune came to him late in life.⁵ We see that the government tried its best to find functionaries for the cities, and resources to fill their treasuries,—a care beneath which was concealed the very legitimate desire to secure public order and the payment of the state-tax. But this self-interested solicitude obliged the government to intervene daily more and more in municipal affairs. The two centuries of the early Empire show a just balance between the power of the

sect. 2, chap. lxxxiii., and for the first attempt upon the liberties of cities, p. 561 of that volume.

¹ Ulpian, in the *Digest*, l. 2. 1. From this time the great anxiety of the government is to retain the rich in the cities. At an earlier period the number of decurions in the Italian cities was a hundred in each; we have seen (Vol. VI. pp. 56 *et seq.*) that this number was often exceeded. The register of Thamagas contained seventy-two names, and these are all either priests or magistrates. Julian (*Misopogon*) compelled all the rich men of Antioch to enter the curia in that city: and many of his predecessors had probably done the same. The minimum of property required for a seat in the curia had been placed very low: it was twenty-five *jugera* (*Code Theod.* xii. 1, 35, anno 342), or 300 *solidi* (*urei*) = \$850 (*Nov. Valent.* III. iii. sect. 4). This *Novella*, which is of the year 439, gives this as a very early figure, *secundum vetera statuta*.

² *Digest*, l. 2, 2, 1 and 3; *Code*, x. 37, 1: *Curiales jubemus ne civitates fugiant . . . fundum . . . scientes fisca esse sociandum.*

³ *Code*, iv. 61, 15. In this constitution Theodosius and Valentinian II. assert that they confirm an ancient custom (*prisca institutio*). It is proper to say that the levy for the state being made only after all the public services of the city had been provided for, the two thirds reserved for the state from the net revenue must have been a very small sum.

⁴ See Vol. VI. p. 107.

⁵ *Digest*, l. 5, 5, *prooem.*

state and the liberty of the cities. While this equilibrium lasted, public prosperity was maintained; when the one was overthrown, the other perished, and the moment of that disaster was near at hand.

The government was not alone responsible for this administrative invasion, which would have been salutary had it been kept within limits.

To understand the slow evolution which led the central power to exercise so strict a control over the cities in which narrow and jealous oligarchies had been formed, we must remember how in the Middle Ages most of the communes came to an end. Their inhabitants also allowed to grow up in their midst a middle-class aristocracy, like that of the Roman decurions, keeping possession of all the public offices and employing the financial resources of the city to promote its private ends. Abuses necessitated the intervention of the suzerain, and, as a consequence, the suppression of the municipal charters. At each epoch the same result was produced by the same causes. It is not that history repeats itself, but there are analogies which make ancient facts intelligible in the light reflected from more recent events. In seeing how our ancestors lost their communal franchises we understand better how those of the Romans were lost.¹ In all times communities have cared little for their rights when their interests were in danger: . . . *neque populus ademptum jus questus est.* To put a stop to certain disorders arising from liberty, an administrative guardianship became necessary, which, exaggerating its legitimate work, soon deprived of life these once vigorous cities.

¹ This is seen in the Middle Ages in countless instances; M. Giry gives yet another instance in the history of the commune of St. Omer. "The provosts had alienated a part of the city's territory; they were accused of maladministration, they were suspected of falsehood and cheating in their accounts; and men grew angry at seeing the municipal offices perpetuated in an aristocracy composed of a few families, whose members, succeeding each other as provosts, passed the city's accounts from hand to hand, and treated the municipal finances as their private inheritance. In 1305 the commune accused the town magistrates, 'after the accustomed way, before the high and noble Madame d'Artois de Bourgogne as their *droit juge*!'" Something like this has been done in our time. "In Ireland, before 1848, there were seventy-one municipal corporations completely independent. The officers of these corporations went so far as to appoint one another. The corporations of Trim and Kells alienated their territory to allow two or three of the members of the corporation to buy it at a nominal price. That of Naas adjudged to one of its members, for a price of twelve pounds sterling, lands which were worth a hundred; that of Drogheda decided that the poor fund should be exclusively expended for the profit of the members of the corporation and their families." (Arth. Desjardins, *De l'Aliénation des biens de l'État et des communes*, p. 34).

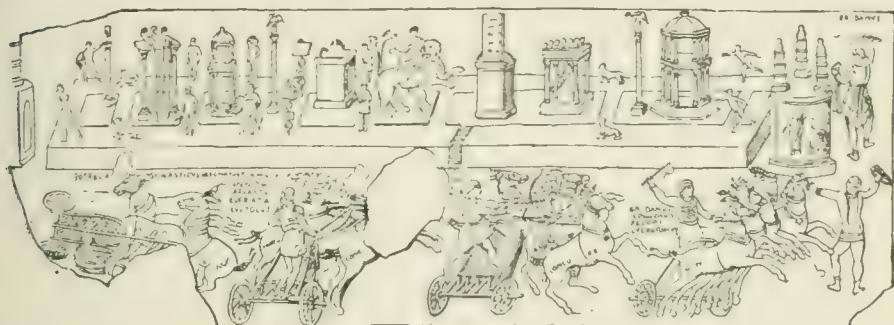
Another evil arose: in undertaking to think and act for all, the imperial government singularly retarded the transaction of public business. A government may be remote, an administration must be close at hand; and when a government administers an immense empire, it necessarily administers it ill. Everything moves slowly, decisions are founded upon documents, far from the parties interested, and out of sight of things themselves, which sometimes speak so eloquently. A document of the year 114 shows that just outside the gates of Rome, under Trajan, it took ten months for the officer in charge of the Caerites to give a signature.¹ When this power, which has suppressed all others by stifling the local life, falls into incapable hands, it must be in its turn suppressed, so to speak, by revolutions. The Emperor having become the universal administrative officer, what, under the Thirty Tyrants, will become of the administration? To put this question is to show what mortal weakness must in those unhappy times have invaded the social body.

Emperors worthy of the name had taken pride in executing great public works,—roads, bridges, monuments of all kinds; when they did not do it themselves, they incited the people of the provinces to these undertakings, and gave them the assistance of cohorts and legions in the work. But the armies now fight with each other, and the rulers who assume this purple—dipped in blood every six months—can think of nothing else but how to protect their own lives. The Empire, abandoned to itself, suspends all work of repair or construction; bridges are broken down, and military roads become impassable. At the same time, the soldiers doing police duty in the interior are called away to increase the number of the troops who are occupied with public affairs rather than with the defence of the country; and so highway robbers re-appear, the roads are no longer safe, traffic is interrupted, and destitution extends.

Although Caracalla's edict had subjected the provinces to new taxes, they now, ravaged by Barbarians or held by usurpers, sent to Rome but insufficient supplies of money; and yet the need increased daily. The wasting of the public revenues by ephemeral

¹ See the letter of the decurions of Caere, *ap. Egger, Historiens d'Auguste*, p. 390, and Orelli, No. 3,787.

Emperors; the lavish gifts made to those adventurers without personal means whom it was necessary to maintain in luxury for the sake of preserving their doubtful fidelity; lastly, a scarcity of money, produced by the continual exportation of the precious metals into countries where the Empire bought much, while selling nothing,—all these causes of poverty compelled recourse to the most disastrous measures of bankrupt governments. Formerly the high offices of the state were held by rich senators, who drew upon their private fortunes in order to defray the expenses of their public position; but now the Emperor is obliged to furnish money for everything. When Aurelian, the son of a poor

GAMES OF THE CIRCUS.¹

freedman, is made consul, Valerian writes to the prefect of the treasury: "On account of his poverty, you will give him, for the games of the circus which he must offer the people, three hundred pieces of gold, three thousand of silver, ten tunics of silk, fifty of Egyptian linen, four Cyprus table-cloths, ten African carpets, ten Mauretanian coverlets, a hundred swine, a hundred sheep; you will cause a public banquet to be served to the knights and senators, and you will furnish for the sacrifice two large animals and two small ones."

Later we shall read of gifts made by Gallienus to Claudius: others obtained from the Emperor lands which did not belong to him. All who assumed the purple in these days perished by a violent death; after the defeat, their partisans were despoiled; and as each province had its usurper, each was exposed to numberless confiscations. The conqueror, not being able to pay his

¹ From a mosaic of Barcelona.

friends with gold, paid them with confiscated property. Claudius Gothicus had received some. After his accession a woman came to claim the possessions of which she had been deprived by Gallienus for the benefit of his lieutenant. "You have taken what belonged to me," she said; but the Emperor answered: "No; as a subject I had then no concern with the execution of the laws. Now, however, as the ruler, it is my duty to attend to it, and I give you back your lands."

To put a stop to this shameful method of obtaining wealth, Claudius forbade any one to solicit another's property; that is to say, to denounce as guilty the innocent for the sake of obtaining their possessions. This edict was still another added to the many laws which, like it, were well meant, and, like it also, without lasting effect.

GOLD COIN.¹

IV.—DECLINE IN INDUSTRY, COMMERCE, AND THE ARTS; DEPOPULATION OF THE EMPIRE.

THE recruiting of the laboring classes went on, like that of the administration and of the army, under conditions growing ever more and more unfavorable. We may represent the Roman Empire as formed of a series of concentric zones extended around the Mediterranean Sea. Those nearest to this sea, having been for the longest time centres of civilization, were the most enlightened and wealthy; in proportion as we advance inland in every direction we approach the barbaric world. Rome began by obtaining her slaves from the first zone which conquest gave her. She took them from southern Italy, Sicily, Greece, Greek Asia, and Carthaginian Africa: a hundred and fifty thousand Epirotes were sold at one time by Paulus Aemilius. These slaves, frequently corrupt, but often intelligent and active, furnished the numerous freedmen who became at Rome architects or physicians, teachers or artists, and also the friends and boon companions of the nobles. This zone being subjugated and reduced to peace, war no longer obtained captives in it, and Rome was obliged to seek her working

¹ Claudius Gothicus, laurelled.

class in the second zone, and afterwards in the third. The great slave-markets thus fell back towards the frontiers. The concession of citizenship to the entire Empire fixed them there, and the Barbarians, who furnished the supply, sold the ruder prisoners whom they themselves had captured in the remote depths of the barbaric world. Claudius, Aurelian, and Probus brought home a countless multitude of prisoners, filling the great estates with incapable or dangerous laborers, under whose hands the earth soon ceased to give other than the most meagre harvests.¹ The progressive steps of the Roman decline are marked by the continuous lowering of what may be called the recruiting material of the state; thus the Athenian republic perished, and the great Roman Empire was to be ruined by the same causes.

Agriculture suffered from an evil of long standing. To the political centralization going on in the city and in the state had corresponded a concentration of fortunes and estates;² or rather the second fact had been the cause of the first, and free labor was disappearing from the country. During thirty years of invasion and civil war, agriculture had to support, beside the usual burdens, innumerable requisitions and incessant devastations. Under so many disasters, which only the great landowners could resist, the petty proprietors succumbed. They abandoned their hereditary acres to become colonists, to take, as soldiers, their share in the immense pillage, or to seek in the cities higher wages and a life which they believed would be less severe. In Diocletian's edict, the laborer, the shepherd, the muleteer are paid but a third as much as the joiner, the mason, and mechanics in general; so that there came about an unfortunate situation, which other ages have also seen,—the urban population increased at the expense of the rural population. One class only had gained in numbers,—the proletariat of the cities and of the country, where serfdom was now beginning to be established.³

¹ Papinian, fifty years before the period with which we are now concerned, fixed the legal price of slaves at 20 aurei, or 500 denarii (*Dig. st.*, iv. 4, 31). We may conclude from this that slaves were becoming scarce, and consequently dear, for this price is high (see Vol. II. p. 358, note 3); whereas the inferior quality of the slaves of that time ought to have lowered the price.

² We have seen, under Nero, that six landowners divided among themselves the whole province of Africa (Pliny, *Hist. nat.* xviii. 6). In the time of Nerva, Frontinus says further: "In Africa private estates are as large as the whole territory of cities" (*Gromatici veter.* p. 53). Under Theodosius is found the same condition of things.

³ In respect to the *coloni*, see Vol. VI. pp. 13 *et seq.*

Agriculture loves free laborers, and she now had them no longer; to be richly productive, she has need of the expenditure of capital,

and, if we except a few great proprietors, this community had no capital to expend: hence the ground returned but small harvests, and famine was always threatening.

Mechanical industry was no better off. The workshops, recruited from the ignorant and despised proletariat, produced poor work, and the system of corporations destroyed competition. Certain trades, whose existence the government made it a point to protect, had been early constituted as monopolies, and it is said that Alexander Severus endeavored to give all the trades the corporative organization,¹ which moreover private individuals took of their own choice. Everywhere traders and mechanics formed associations,—the bakers of Rome and Ostia, the boatmen of the Saône and the Rhône, the mariners of the Seine, ship-carpenters, ship-brokers, measurers of corn, and the



AS LIBRALIS OF LATIUM.

like; all those who labored with their hands sought security in union, and fortune in the privileges which they obtained from the authority or gave to themselves by closing the common market against their rivals.²

¹ Vol. VI. pp. 96 *et seq.*

² See Vol. VI. p. 107, note 2, the privileges accorded to the traders and laborers connected with the mine of Aljustrel.

Manufacturing industry was still further slackened by the lessened demands of trade now hampered by revolutions, by the cessation of public works, by increasing taxation, and also by piracy and robbery on the highways springing up again, against which the Emperors no longer made war, so occupied were they with their own private quarrels. It further suffered, and perhaps most of all, from an extremely bad monetary system.

The amount of silver and gold in circulation in the Empire was diminishing,—less on account of the mines being exhausted than by reason of the difficulty of obtaining their products. The working of mines, so well conducted under the Early Empire, required, in order to be kept up actively with the processes at that time employed, a resolute discipline; and for the existence of

this discipline it was essential that the Empire should still have the strong and stable government which it had no longer.² When, in the reign of Valens, the Goths invaded Thrace, all the miners escaped to the Barbarians. The

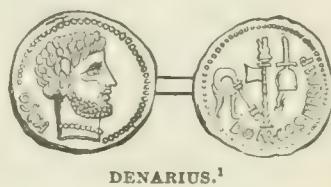
COPPER COIN.³

scarcity of the precious metals produced disastrous consequences. The Republic had at first known but one coin,—the bronze as; after the Punic Wars silver became the monetary standard (the sesterce and the denarius). The Early Empire had the gold piece (aureus), and for two hundred years gold was the chief circulating medium. Silver came afterwards, and copper does not seem to have been in use, for we find none in the treasures buried at that time. We

¹ Denarius of Domitius Calvinus of the year 40 B. C.

² Hirschfeld, *Die Bergwerke*, pp. 72-91, and Flach, *Table d'Aljustrel*. Under the Republic and in the first century of the Empire the mines of precious metals and the quarries of marble which belonged to the state were farmed out like the other revenues. In the second century they were placed under the supreme direction of a *procurator Caesaris*, assisted by numerous subordinates for superintendence or direct management (*probatores*). When anarchy invaded the government it also took possession of the mines, whence slaves and criminals constantly made their escape. Observe that the procurator was often one of the Emperor's freedmen, and that centurions, serving, like our discharged soldiers, in many civil occupations, sometimes had the superintendence of the works; thus for the marbles of Synnada, in Phrygia, a centurion had charge of the *caesura*, or cutting (*Mélanges de l'École fran^caise de Rome*, August, 1882, p. 291).

³ Copper coin of the third century A. D.: C. Postumus. (J. de Witte, *Recherches sur les empereurs qui ont régné dans les Gaules au troisième siècle*. No. 256, pl. xvi.)

DENARIUS.¹

have elsewhere explained¹ how it came about that the great republican fortunes, the fruits of conquest, took more than a century to disappear. Public and private wealth still lasted under the Antonines. But in the third century both were seriously impaired. Of this there is twofold proof,—the coins were debased, and in the buried money of that time pieces of gold become more and more rare, and there is a great quantity of base coin and of copper. The aurei found, differ in weight, and we are obliged to conclude that, losing its character of a representative sign of value, the aureus came to be only bullion accepted in trade for its weight, so that traffic went back to the time when buyer and seller needed to be furnished with scales.³

This would have been merely an annoyance and a waste of time; the debasement of coin was to persons engaged in business

a cause of perpetual deceptions, and even of ruin. Under the Empire the monetary unit was the sesterce,—a coin equal in value to a quarter of the denarius, or one hundredth of the aureus. Now, the silver denarius in the first years of

Nero's reign, of which there were ninety-six to the pound, and almost of pure metal, contained in the time of Alexander Severus fifty or sixty per cent of alloy, and from a value of about seventeen cents had fallen to that of about seven.⁴ To this depreciation of silver naturally corresponded an augmentation in the value of gold. The state believed it wise to take advantage of this by requiring all taxes to be paid in aurei.⁵ This was as fraudulent

¹ Vol. VI. pp. 263 *et seq.*

² Gold coin of the third century A. D.: C. Postumus (*J. de Witte, ibid. pl. xvi. No. 251*); Providence on the reverse. Quinarius of gold, or semis, the half of an aureus. The quinarius of silver (or half denarius) was so called because it had the value of five ases. *Denarii*, says Varro, *quod denos aeris valebant, quinarii, quod quinos.*

³ In the fourth century the treasury required, to prevent frauds, that the tax-gatherers should pay their receipts in ingots.

⁴ Two silver pieces of Decius, identical in appearance, are worth, the one about $10\frac{1}{2}$ cents, the other about 6 cents (Mommsen, *Hist. de la monnaie romaine*, vol. iii. p. 85, note 1). Accordingly, treasury orders did not, as we have seen (p. 190, note 2), bear the definite figures, so much money, like the 25,000 sesterces which were originally the pay of the legionary tribune, but a mention of so many gold philips and trientes which, put together, would amount to about that sum.

⁵ See on that point p. 81, note 3.



GOLD COIN.²



DENARIUS OF NERO.

as it would be now to refuse to receive into the public treasuries bank-notes issued by the state at their face value. Or, if a word less harsh be preferred, it was an increase of taxation such as has recently occurred in great states where paper money is below par, when it was decided that custom-dues be paid in gold. The taxpayer, for example, who owed a hundred sesterces, could not pay it, as before, with twenty-five denarii, worth to him in his daily transactions about \$1.75; he must give the tax-gatherer an aureus, of which the value was much greater. After the year 256, silver coin contained not over twenty, and sometimes only five per cent of pure metal. Under Claudius Gothicus, the Antoninianus, the silver coin most common in circulation, was a mixture of copper, tin, and lead, with a whitish coating which gave the pieces when new an appearance of silver. But instead of a precious metal, the possessor of this piece of money had only an alloy of copper; it was nothing



ANTONINIANUS OF
CLAUDIUS GOTHI-
CUS.¹

more than a token.² The same government which condemned the counterfeiter to the wild beasts,³ gave a forced currency to the base coin which it put in circulation, and punished with banishment or death those who refused to receive it,⁴ on the ground that the Emperor's image upon the

piece was competent to give it whatever value he chose to assign to it.

The intrinsic value of the aureus was reduced, like that of the silver denarius: Caesar made forty to the pound, Caracalla, fifty, Constantine, seventy-two; and at the same time the amount of pure metal employed decreased, and the quantity of alloy increased,—in the first century, .009; in the second, .062; in the third, still more.⁵

¹ From the *Cabinet de France*.

² From Claudius II. to Diocletian there are only very few coins which contain any silver at all (Eckhel, vii. 475). This author remarks that from the time of Claudius all the cities except Alexandria and three cities of Pisidia — Antioch, Selencia, and Sagalassos — had lost the right of coining money.

³ Ulpian, in the *Digest*, xlviij. 10, 8.

⁴ Paul, *Sent. Recept.* v. 25, 1.

⁵ Lenormant, *La monnaie dans l'antiquité*, i. 202. In respect to the distinction between coins or pieces circulating in trade, commemorative medals, like the immense gold piece

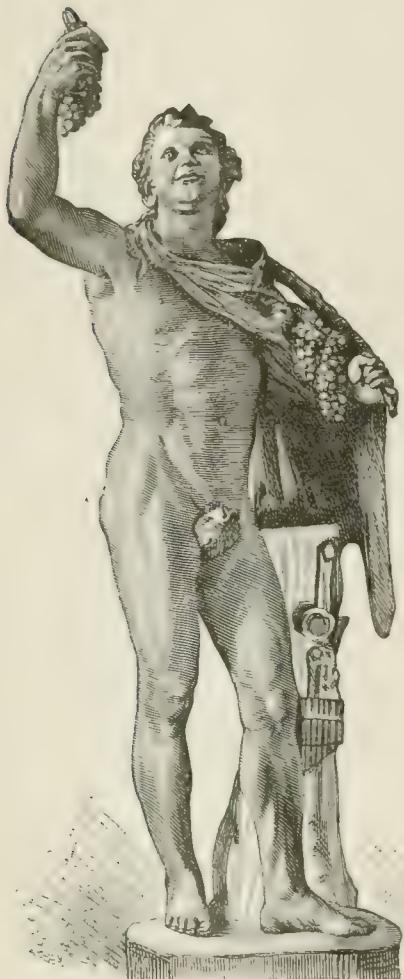


ARGENTEUS MINUTULUS OF
CARACALLA.

The Empire, therefore, was in a condition like that of France in her most evil days,—about the middle of the fourteenth century; and it can with justice be said that from the reign of Gallienus to the middle of that of Diocletian, the monetary system of the Romans was a permanent bankruptcy.¹ Under the infliction of these constant disturbances of the currency,—discouraging both to the producer and the trader,—labor diminished; and we have seen that from other causes the article produced lost in quality as well as quantity.

In the region of intellectual and artistic labor the decline was even more manifest.

The religion of the beautiful disappeared with the gods who had inspired it, and in its ruin dragged with it art, which always corresponds to the condition of men's minds, because in order to produce its work it requires to be solicited by the public taste. It had besides a formidable enemy. In its first age Christianity was iconoclastic; it anathematized



FAUN OF ROSSO ANTICO.²

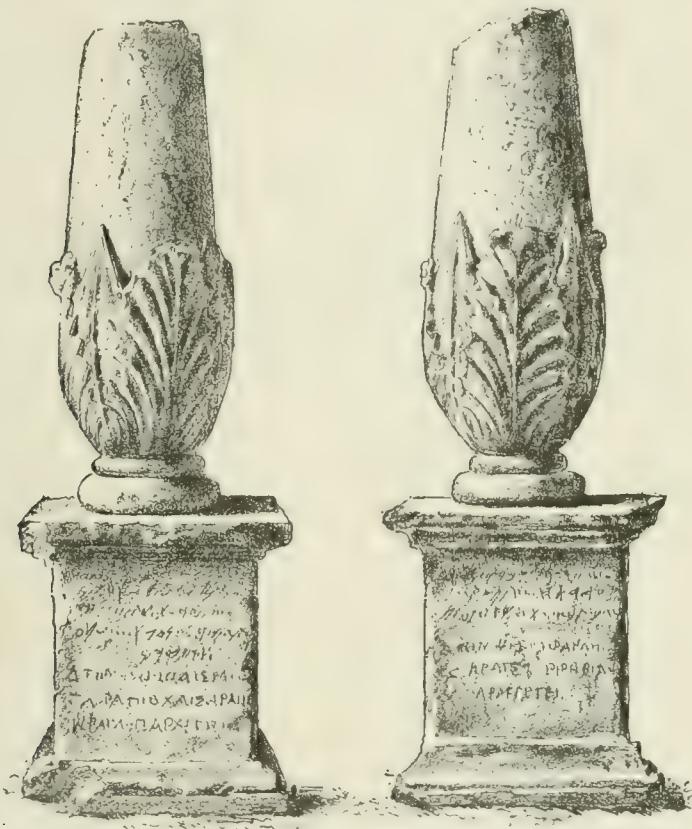
pagan art, forbidding the devout to cultivate it, and wherever it could do so destroyed the statues of the gods. The Bishop of Caesarea,

of Eueratidas, imperial medallions employed as presents to great personages at the epoch of military gifts, and often worn around the neck on a collar, as a decoration; the pieces made for religious offerings or for prizes at certain sacred games; those worn as talismans; theatrical tesserae, tokens, and the like,—see the Introduction to the first volume of Lenormant's work just cited. The custom of women wearing coins about the neck, or set as ornaments, is very ancient.

¹ Mommsen, *Hist. de la monnaie rom.* vol. iii. p. 144, and Lenormant, *ibid.* vol. i. pp. 172 and 184.

² Statue found at Hadrian's Villa (Vatican, Museo Pio-Clementino, Cabinet, No. 433).

in the fourth century, would not allow the figure of Christ to be represented; and the rude frescos of the catacombs show what painting became in Christian hands. Art, which was so useless to the new faith, was no more serviceable to what remained of the old.



CONICAL STONES REPRESENTING MELKARTH-BAAL, THE PHOENICIAN HERCULES.¹

What could it do with the black stone of Elagabalus, the conical deities of the Syrians, even with the Ephesian Diana of the fifty breasts,² or with the Olympians made objects of caricature, like the beautiful Ganymede represented as an ape at the feasts of Isis?³

¹ Stones found at Malta, of which one is in the Museum of the Louvre. The Phoenician Hercules was represented in his sanctuary in Tyre by two columns of gold and emerald. The two cones of Malta bear the same inscription in Phoenician and Greek; it is a dedication made by two brothers to Melkarth-Baal, "the king of the city" (Communication of M. Ph. Berger). In respect to conical stones, see above, p. 108, note 1.

² See Vol. IV. p. 168; and yet the Greeks had succeeded in giving to this deformed object all the beauty that it was capable of receiving.

³ Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, xi.

How could men have presented in marble or in bronze the hypostases of the neo-Platonists and the confused abstractions of the Gnostics? From the temple and the forum, art had fallen to the boudoir.

It at first maintained itself by imitating ancient methods. But this imitation growing more feeble as the models were more remote, it became impossible to produce anything that was not dull and affected. The inspiration being lost, nothing remained except a handicraft; and the unworthy successors of the masters worked by contract for an impoverished and coarse community which had lost all taste for the elegance of earlier days. Compare the busts of this period with the statues of the Early Empire,¹ or the sculptures of the Arch of Con-

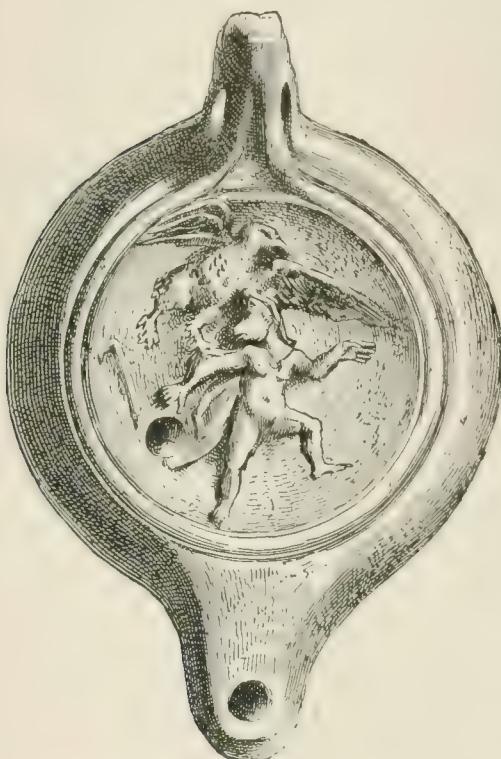
GANYMEDE AS AN APE, ON A LAMP IN THE
MUSEUM OF THE LOUVRE.

stantine with those of the Antonine age,—even the pretty trifles, the exquisite vases, the graceful furniture of Pompeii, with the ceramics and the heavy ornamentation of the end of the third century,—and it will be evident that barbarism is approaching.²

Stern preachers of philosophy and religion had driven laughter away, while public calamities had put an end to happiness, and

¹ Eckhel (vii. 458) says of the bronze coins of Postumus, Victorinus, and Tetricus: *Ultimam plerique barbariem redolent, sic ut non in provincia . . . sed Sarmatas inter Gothosque . . . percussi videri possint.* Many others of these Emperors are coins of the Early Empire re-minted (De Witte, *Revue numism.* vi. 1861). At the same time, M. de Witte has published many fine bronze coins of Postumus, and the difference is explained by the diversity of mints. That of Lyons especially, which belonged to the Gallic Emperor, had traditions and artists enabling it still to issue fine coins, and we shall see them until the close of the century.

² See, in the *Congrès archéologique de France*, vol. xlvi. 1881, pp. 220–239, the remarks of Dr. Plique upon the Gallo-Roman pottery made at Lezoux (Puy-de-Dôme).



art, which is the joy of life, no longer was able to adorn it: the sadness of the Middle Ages was beginning.

We must also bear in mind the danger from the Barbarians. The fear of invasion obliged the cities, which had remained open during “the Roman Peace,” to shut themselves up within walls; and to build these walls they had in many places already destroyed the edifices that more fortunate generations had constructed. At Tours, at Orleans, at Angers, at Bordeaux, at Saintes, at Narbonne, at Reims, at Poitiers and in many other cities of Gaul, we find in the old walls fragments of columns or entablatures, monumental stones and inscriptions. Themistocles had pursued a similar course in Athens, but Pericles and Pheidias came after him; while after the great architects of the Antonines there were only masons.¹

The Greek language was still written with elegance. Oppianus of Cilicia and Babrius (if Babrius belongs to the third century) are two good versifiers, almost two poets; the name of Longinus is always mentioned with respect; and Photius, in a transport of generosity, places the historian Dexippus beside

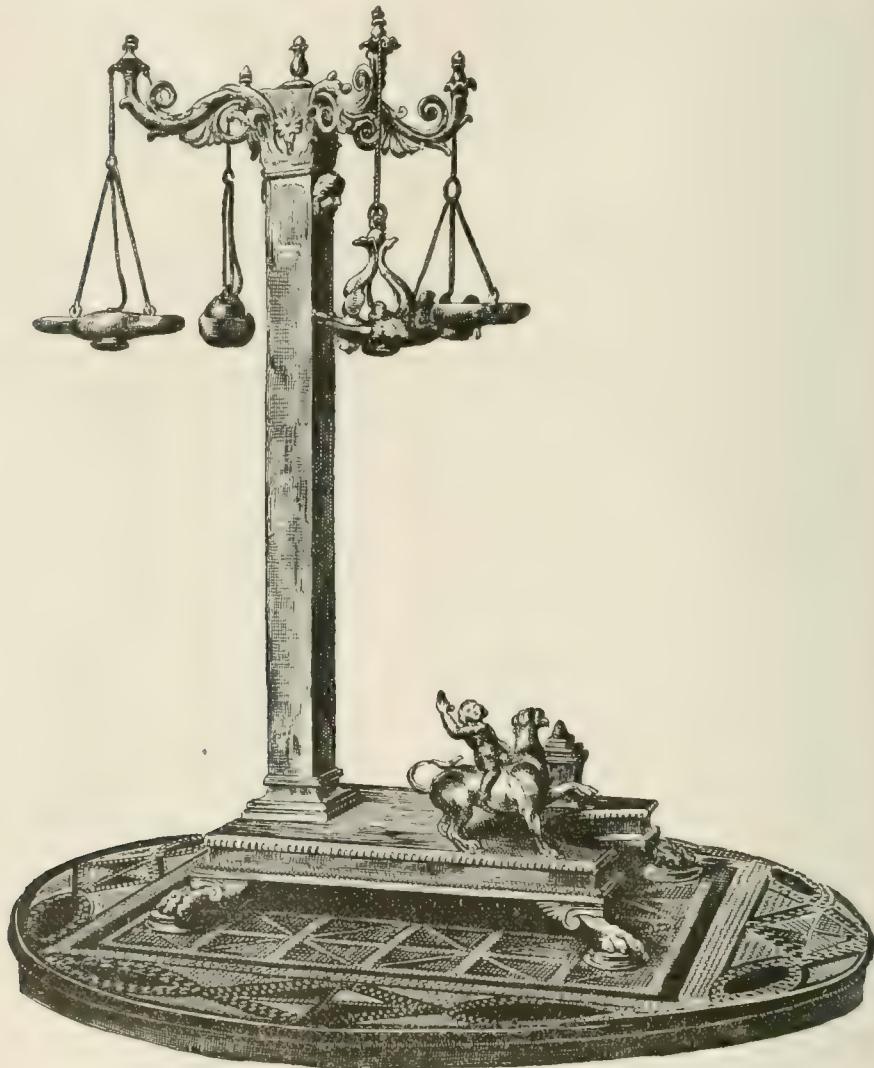
¹ De Caumont, *Cours d'ant. mon.* 8th part, *passim*; Batissier, *Histoire de l'art monumental*; *Revue archéol.* November, 1877, p. 351; and *Mémoires de la Société archéol. de Bordeaux*, 1880, pp. 63 et seq.

² On the base, Jupiter; the other sides represent Juno and Minerva (Vatican. Gallery of Statues, No. 412).



CANDELABRUM OF HADRIAN'S VILLA
(MARBLE).²

Thucydides. We certainly shall not give this honor either to Dion Cassius or Herodian, both of whom, however, have frequently been useful to us. Aelian and Philostratus resemble one another in their simple-minded credulity; we are indebted alike to Diogenes Laertius



CANDELABRUM FROM THE HOUSE OF DIOMEDES AT POMPEII.

and Athenaeus for much precious information; and the vigorous intellect of Origen gives promise of the splendor which the Greek Fathers of the subsequent century will cast over the Church. The Roman world was turning more and more towards the East; there is life nowhere else at this time.

As for Latin literature, it was absolute nullity. There were still men of letters, for there always must be in a civilized society. But the writers of the time saw only the lesser sides of things; they take anecdote for history, rhetoric for eloquence, versification for poetry.¹ The union, once so fruitful, between the genius of Rome and that of Athens no longer exists; and this divorce of the two literatures is a sign which foretells the approaching separation between the two empires.² The Latin mind grows visibly weaker, except in the Church, where Cyprian at Carthage is the precursor of Augustine at Hippo.

Moreover the Christians have also their share in the decline of the Empire. A half-century of tranquillity had singularly increased their number; but although life, which was enfeebled in the pagan world, was ardent in their communities, they were for the state a cause of weakness rather than strength. The Roman law punished celibacy; they honored it. The great development of the monastic system comes in the following century; but many believers already shunned marriage, which their clergy, as a rule, avoided.³ They lived by themselves, avoiding all intercourse with the pagans, except in cases of absolute necessity, and abhorred the sacrilegious festivals of the latter. Foreigners in the cities, whose honors they rejected, they were the same also in the Empire, which they refused to defend by arms,⁴ and without displeasure they saw the approach of the Barbarians. On the way to execution Saint Marianus exclaimed: "God will avenge the blood of the righteous; I hear, I see the white horsemen coming!" and Commodianus depicts in barbaric verse the Goths marching

¹ We must, however, regret the *Memoirs* of Septimius Severus, and also perhaps the *History of Marius Maximus*, often quoted by the compilers of the *Augustinian History*. — although Vopiscus (*Firmus*, 1) says of this writer: *Homo omnium verhosissimus, qui et mythistoricis se voluminibus implicavit*, — and some other chroniclers of whom we know scarcely more than the names. There remain three verses written by the Emperor Gallienus, a fragment of an epithalamium which he composed for the marriage of one of his nephews. Censorinus wrote his treatise *De Die natali* in 239. Two other grammarians, Nonius Marcellus and Festus, are sometimes said to belong to the third century. The two versifiers Nemesianus and Calpurnius come at the close of the century, and cannot be placed in the list of true poets: Calpurnius is a very skilful maker of verses.

² In the fourth century the Eastern bishops and most illustrious doctors of the Church were ignorant of Latin.

³ See on this subject, pp. 54 *et seq.*

⁴ See p. 48 of this volume, and also what is said by Aelius Aristides (ii. 402, ed. Dindorf) of Christians who are unwilling to participate in the affairs of the city.

upon Rome with "the destroyer king,"¹ to bring to nought the enemies of the saints and to put the Senate under the yoke. Marianus and "Christ's beggar" were right in announcing to the persecutors an approaching expiation; but others were wrong in making themselves the instruments of it. In Pontus, the Christians united with the Goths to pillage the pagans, overthrow the idols, and burn the temples.² At last the Emperors, taking alarm, sought to extirpate by fire and sword that refractory element which the menaces of the law and judicial executions had not been able to hold in check. Thenceforth terror was to brood over the nations, the purest blood was to flow, and something like a civil war was to be added to the foreign war.

The latter had the character of wars among savages. The Western provinces have already witnessed scenes as terrible as those of the American frontier when the savages swoop down upon it, scalping the men, carrying off the women, and leaving the buildings a mass of smoking ruins. Everywhere the invaders found, as guides to the richest dwellings and the best-concealed treasures, slaves of barbaric origin, who regarded them as liberators. Thrace and Greece and Asia Minor also beheld bloodshed and devastation and long trains of captives, whom the Barbarians, wearied with expeditions and satiated with plunder, carried away with them to their encampments in the North. At each new invasion the ravages extended farther,—first by land, then by sea.

¹ *Commod. episc. Afric. Carmen apologeticum*, in the *Spicilegium Solesmense* of Dom Pitra, i. 43. Commodianus calls the Gothic king Apoleon, from ἀπόλλυμι, to ruin, to destroy. "He marches upon Rome," says this old author, "with thousands of Gentiles, and . . . makes captive the vanquished. Many senators shall with them weep in chains. . . . Meanwhile these Gentiles will everywhere cherish the Christians, and, rejoicing, seek them out as brethren . . ." (verses 800–815). From verse 801 on, the *Carmen* is believed to have been written at the exact time with which we are now occupied, before the persecution of Decius in 238. Tertullian, in his *Apol.* 37, addressed to the Roman magistrates, calls upon them to regard it as a merit in the Christians that they did not favor the attacks of the Mauretanians upon Hadrian, of the Marcomanni upon Marcus Aurelius, of the Parthians upon Severus,—which proves that in his heart the idea of aiding the enemies of the Empire was not repugnant to him. Two centuries later, Salvianus, in his *De Gubernatione Dei*, still extolled, in the midst of the calamities of an invasion, "the virtues of the Barbarians, who scorn all those infamous practices which the Romans permit. Vice, which is with them the exception, is the rule among us." This is the same spirit which, in the first century, led Saint John to condemn "the great whore." See p. 49 of this volume.

² See the fifth canon of Saint Gregory Thaumaturgus in Routh, *Reliquiae sacrae*, iii. 262, who adds: *Ista Barbarorum incursio gravissimis inter christianos perpetrandis delictis occasionem praebuit.*

The Goths were soon to construct vessels and carry devastation along all coasts. "Hordes of Seythians," says Ammianus Marcellinus, "crossing with two thousand vessels the Bosphorus and the Propontis, devastated the shores of the Aegean. . . . All the cities of Pamphylia suffered the horrors of a siege; Anchialos was taken; many islands were ravaged; and a multitude of enemies long surrounded Cyzicus and Thessalonica. Fire was carried through all Macedon; Epirus, Thessaly, and Greece suffered invasion."¹ The rich cities bordering the Sea of the Cyclades were obliged to rebuild their walls, which in two centuries of peace had been suffered to fall into decay, the Athenians to resume their weapons, grown rusty since the time of Sylla, and the Peloponnesians to bar their isthmus with a wall.² Everywhere was fighting and bloodshed. At Philippopolis a hundred thousand dead bodies, it was said, lay beneath the ruins. The provinces unvisited by the Franks and Goths had other plunderers; in Sicily freebooters became so numerous that this once favored island seemed ravaged by a new Servile war.

Man, directing his strength against himself, suspended his struggle against the powers of Nature, which resumed their sway and emphasized it with cruel energy. From the accumulated ruins, the untilled ground, and the undrained waters, emerged contagion. The Empire seemed a great body in dissolution, exhaling deadly miasma. For twelve years (250–262) there was constantly a pestilence in the provinces. At one time, in Rome and Achaia, five thousand persons died daily; at Alexandria there was not a house without its dead; and the army of Valerian was reduced by sickness before encountering the archers of Sapor.

To these scourges was added another. The volcanic belt which extends in two directions,—from the Alps of Friuli across Italy and Sicily to Africa, and from the Adriatic to the Aegean Sea and the coasts of Syria,—resumed its activity. The earth was shaken, and gave forth dull rumbling sounds; the sky was black for many days; chasms yawned in the ground; and the sea, rushing in tremendous waves upon the shore, destroyed many cities.

¹ xxxi. 5. The picture which Zosimus (i. 23) traces of these devastations is even more gloomy.

² Zosimus, i. 29; the *Syneccluſus*, i. 715 (Bonn ed.); Zonaras, xii. 22.

It seemed as if the threats uttered by the Christians concerning the end of the world were about to be fulfilled. The Sibylline books, being consulted, ordered a sacrifice to Jupiter Salutaris.¹

A document preserved by Eusebius sums up in brief and terrible words this situation of the Empire. In the capital of Egypt the number of persons between the ages of fourteen and eighty, inscribed, during the reign of Gallienus, on the registers of the alimentary institution, did not exceed the number of the men from forty to seventy years old who formerly had shared in these distributions.² Alexandria therefore had at this time lost more than one half of her population. But if such were the case in a city which had never seen a Barbarian,³ what must have been the condition of the provinces where they had made so many victims! It would not be going too far to say that in the space of twenty years the portion of the human race contained within the limits of the Empire, and formerly so prosperous, had diminished by one half. Such was one of the effects of governmental anarchy and of the first entrance of the Germanic race into the Graeco-Roman world.

We have admired the Early Empire promoting order, security, and industry,—the chief function of government in all ages, and its justification in periods of absolute power,—and we have repeated the words of gratitude that its subjects at that time so often uttered. It is now our duty to show these same subjects disaffected towards rulers who were not able to defend them, and who ruined them by excessive taxation. Rome is no longer the sovereign goddess in whom all confide. Each province desires to have its own emperor; even dynasties of Gallic and Syrian origin appear. This is what a half century of revolutions has made of the flourishing empire of the Antonines and Severus. In states where the ruler is everything, and institutions are nothing, decline may rapidly succeed greatness; for while there are never providential men,

¹ Treb. Pollio, *Gall.* 4 and 5.

² *Hist. eccl.* vii. 21, from a letter of Dionysios, the bishop of Alexandria. In France, out of every million of inhabitants there are 789,559 between the ages of 18 and 80, and 267,652 between the ages of 40 and 70. The proportion between these two numbers is 2.95 to 1.

³ Egypt had suffered no invasion, but had been for twelve years agitated with sanguinary tumults, which the carelessness of the general government had allowed to break out in many other places (Euseb., *ibid.*, and Amm. Marcellinus, xxii. 16).

there are necessary men. Let Trajan, Hadrian, or Severus be at the head of the government, and a hundred million Romans live in quiet and prosperity ; let incapable men be there, and disorder is in the armies, and the Barbarians are in the provinces. Civilization advances, not by means of the masses, but by means of great men ; Nature at that time producing no such men, civilization fell away.



PILUM.

CHAPTER XCVI.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF DECIUS TO THE DEATH OF GALLIENUS (249-268).

PARTIAL INVASIONS THROUGHOUT THE EMPIRE.

I.—DECIUS (249-251 A.D.); GOTHS AND CHRISTIANS.

C. MESSIUS QUINTUS TRAJANUS DECIUS was born of a Roman family, living in the town of Budalia near Sirmium: in the year 201, according to Aurelius Victor; in 191, according to

the Chronicle of Alexandria. He heads the long list of Illyrian Emperors, many of whom were destined to do the state great service. They were not possessed of brilliant qualities, but they were men of accurate minds



ETRUSCILLA, WIFE OF DECIUS
(BRONZE MEDALLION).



TRAJAN DECIUS
(BRONZE MEDALLION).

and energetic character, as might be expected from natives of those poor and warlike provinces.

Decius was of humble origin, and rose to distinction through his military career.¹ The old authors² praise him very highly; but his reign does not justify their eulogiums: it was extremely short, and the history of it is singularly confused and contains many contradictions. Three facts, however, are distinct, and they suffice,—a war against the Goths; the re-establishment of the

¹ *Militiae gradu ad imperium* (Aur. Victor, *Caes.* 29).

² Especially Zosimus (i. 21-23) and Aur. Victor (29).

censorship (which indicates a return towards ancient customs); and, as a result of this, a persecution against the great innovation of the times, Christianity.

After his victory near Verona (September, 249),¹ Decius went to Rome with his son, Quintus Herennius Etruscus, whom he had named Caesar;² but he was almost immediately forced to leave the city to repel an invasion of the Goths.

Confiding in the successes he had obtained in Thrace over these Barbarians, Gordian III. had refused the annual subsidy promised to this nation. At least Jordanes³ relates that the Gothic king complained of this, and that he crossed the Danube with thirty thousand of his people to ravage



QUINTUS HERENNIVS
ETRUSCUS.

Moesia. Other Barbarians joined him; Roman soldiers even came to get a share in the plunder, and the mountaineers of the Haemus, upon whom Greek and Roman civilization had had but little effect, doubtless furnished the invaders with guides and auxiliaries. The great city of Marcianopolis only escaped by the payment of a ransom.⁵

When the Goths returned with rich spoils, the Gepidae attempted to plunder the plunderers; a hot engagement followed, in which the former were victorious. These events took place

¹ We have a rescript of his, dated October 16, 249, in the *Code*, x. 16, 3, and, according to Eckhel, Philip was still living on the 29th of August of that year.

² Eckhel, vii. 342. Aurelius Victor (29) says that the Caesar was immediately sent in *Illyrius*. Decius had a second son, C. Valens Hostilianus Messius Quintus, who was also made Caesar and Prince of the Youth.

³ In respect to the pensions paid the Goths since the time of Alexander Severus, see Tillemont, iii. 216. Jordanes, in his *History of the Goths*, gives an abstract of a great work, now lost, by Cassiodorus, the favorite minister of Theodosius. In respect to the Gothic war, see Wietersheim, *op. cit.* vol. ii., where he discusses the contradictory narratives of Jordanes, Zoismus, Zonaras, and Aur. Victor. These details, however, lose all their interest in presence of the too certain fact of the defeat of the Roman army and the death of Decius.

⁴ The god standing at the left, holding a cornucopia and a patera. — The Greek colonies of the coast of Thrace, far from changing the condition of the country, had felt the influence of their Barbarian neighbors, who had modified the manners, the forms of worship, and even the language of these Greeks. An inscription of the year 238 shows at Odessus the Thracian god Derziparos; and upon early coins of that city the great god of the Odessians was Kurza (*Rerue archéol.*, March, 1878, p. 114; cf. Dumont, *Inscr. de Thrace*).

⁵ *Post longam obsidionem, accepto pra mio ditatus Geta recessit* (Jordanes, 17).



COIN OF ODESSUS.⁴

during the reign of Philip. The invasion had been so disastrous for Moesia that the monetary series of the Pontic cities stops with this Emperor; there was no more gold left to coin.

In the reign of Decius, Kniva, another Gothic king, made a still more formidable invasion; he divided his forces into two bodies, sent one to ravage the part of Moesia which the Roman troops had abandoned in order to concentrate themselves in the strongholds, and with the other, which amounted to seventy thousand men, he attacked Ad Novas, an important city on the Danube. Repulsed by the future Emperor Gallus, at that time *dux* in Moesia, he attempted to surprise Nicopolis, which Trajan



QUINARIUS OF BRONZE OF TRAJAN DECIUS, EQUAL IN VALUE TO TWO SESTERCES.

had built in memory of his Dacian victories. But here the Gothic leader encountered an army which Decius had collected at that point. Unable to force the lines, the Barbarian, with the audacity of an

Indian marauder, left the Emperor in his camp, and going over the Haemus, of which the passes were entirely unguarded, came down upon the great city of Philippopolis, without keeping open a line of retreat. Decius followed him by mountain paths, where the Roman army, both men and horses, suffered severely. The Emperor had reached Beroea, sixty miles eastward from Philippopolis, and believed himself to be still far distant from the Goths, when the Barbarian leader fell upon him unawares, and made great slaughter among the imperial troops. Decius had only time to escape across the Haemus. While the Emperor was reforming an army from the garrisons of fortresses, the Goth seized upon Philippopolis by the connivance of Priscus, the governor of Macedon, who seems to have assumed the purple.¹ The Barbarian king then returned into Moesia, to deposit in a safe place across the Danube the fruits of this fortunate campaign.

¹ Aur. Victor (29) represents the Goths as entering Macedonia, where, according to this author, they instigated the usurpation of Priscus.

On his way he encountered the Emperor, who hoped to avenge the Empire by recapturing from the Goths their booty and their captives, among whom were several persons of rank. The treason of Gallus caused Decius to lose a second battle, in which he perished with his son, and even his dead body was not recovered (November, 251).¹

This was the first Emperor who fell under the enemy's sword within Roman territory. Accordingly, this disaster carried terror through the provinces, and joy and hope into the barbaric world; it was the terrible prologue to the great drama which was not to end until the day when the German race, after covering with blood and ruins all Roman Europe and a part of the East, installed a Barbarian in the palace of Augustus and Trajan.

Two great faults and one mistake had been committed by Decius during his very short reign. Notwithstanding his experience, he neither knew how to prepare for a Gothic war, nor to carry it on sagaciously; and the result was the devastation of two provinces and his own death. As he would have had the credit of a victory, so he must bear the blame of a defeat. His second fault was the persecution of the Christians. The mistake which he made exhibits a political simplicity astonishing in a man of his time; he re-established the censorship, fallen into disuse since the days of Claudius and Domitian, and the Senate invested Valerian with the office. "Undertake the censorship of the world," the Emperor said to him; "determine who shall remain in the Senate, and restore to the equestrian order its renown; take charge of the census and the levying of taxes; make the laws, and appoint to the high military offices. Your supervision will extend as far as the imperial palace and over all magistrates, with the exception of the urban prefect, the consuls, the *rex sacrorum*, and the chief vestal."

If Trebellius Pollio² really read these words in the public acts of the reign, it was a temporary colleague that Decius gave himself,—a sort of interrex, whom he left behind him in the capital at a moment when he and his son were about to depart for a

¹ Before this invasion it would appear that Decius gained some victories in Dacia, for an inscription calls him *restitutor Daciarum* (Orelli, 991), and others against the Germans, *victoria Germanica* (Eckhel, vii. 344, 345); but there is no trace of this in the histories.

² *Valerianus*, 1.

dangerous war.¹ We may even discern in this measure a new manifestation of the idea that it was wise to divide the imperial power among several persons,—to have, as in the time of Pupienus and Balbinus, one emperor in the city, and another in the army.

The censorship had wisely been suffered to fall into disuse; for it was an institution which, though useful in a little city, must necessarily be impracticable in a great state. But while it was impossible to restore the past, it appeared practicable to proscribe certain things in the present; and Valerian, who by no means brought back the manners of early Rome, made in the name of Decius, and later in his own name, a bitter war against the new creeds.

The Christian ideal was a higher one than that of Marcus Aurelius, but it was less disinterested. The sage who chanced to be an emperor, asked for nothing in return for his obedience to duty; and hence but few have followed him. The Christian, on the contrary, made his bargain with God, as the pagan world had bargained with Jupiter. In return for their piety, the latter desired earthly good; in return for his, the former felt himself secure of eternal blessedness. His religion, therefore, possessed a powerful attraction for those spirits who were not resigned to submit to the universal law of creation,—after life, death; and the secret of the tomb left to God. To the divine hopes which she held out, the Church added words and deeds of gentleness. In the midst of an aristocratic community, extremely harsh towards the lowly, she taught the equality of all men, great and small, Roman and Barbarian, in the presence of the divine law, and promised to “the servants of God,” whether slaves or senators, the same rewards. Her spirit of universal love, her care for the sick and poor, the new virtues that she required in the place of those that the Romans had lost in losing the dignity of citizenship,² had gained her many hearts.

But while the number of believers was increasing, the virtue of the early days seemed to grow less. If we may accept the words of Saint Cyprian, we must believe that the peace which the Church had now enjoyed for forty years, had been fatal to discipline

¹ Zonaras (xii. 22) even makes Valerian the colleague of Decius.

² Vol. I. p. 148, and Vol. V. pp. 413 *et seq.*

and morals; that piety was dead in the priests, integrity in those who had charge of the finances of the Church, charity in the believers; and that all the vices of the pagan world had invaded the members of Jesus Christ. Instead of assisting the poor, they fraudulently possessed themselves of lands and heritages, and increased their revenues by usury.¹ "We devour one another,"

SAINT CYPRIAN AND SAINT LAWRENCE.²

says a second contemporary; "and our sins have raised a wall between God and us. Haman insults us; Esther, with all the righteous, is in confusion, for all the virgins have suffered their lamps to go out: they are asleep, and the door is shut. When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth? The Word has his fan in his hand, that he may cleanse his floor."³ Like all pulpit orators, Saint Cyprian exaggerates. His picture of the "fall" is too dark, as his apologies are too brilliant in

¹ *De Lapsis, passim.*

² On a gilded glass of the catacombs (Roller, *op. cit. pl. lxxviii. No. 7*).

³ Saint Pionius, priest in Smyrna, and martyr in 250. (*4p. Bollandists, February 1, p. 45*). Reference to the parable of the wise and the foolish virgins: *an omnino dormitarerunt omnes virgines et dormierunt . . . (Id. ibid.)*.

color. Saint Cyprian wrote in the midst of a persecution; since God had permitted it, its justice must be proved, and the irregularities of the Christians became necessary to explain the divine chastisement. Events really had a more natural cause. Since the time of the short persecution under Severus,¹ heroism had not been called out; enthusiasm had diminished, and consequently men's lives become less rigorous. But the hatred between Christians and pagans remained unabated, and the latter, seeing so many woes fall upon the Empire,—invasions of Barbarians, a destructive pestilence, and endless revolutions,—believed the gods offended by the impunity allowed to those who blasphemed them. The government also became uneasy at the presence of this enemy, which, under penalty of its own destruction, the pagan state must either assimilate or destroy. Decius—a harsh and narrow-minded ruler, who in his love of the past believed himself able to resuscitate the dead, restore to the Senate its power and to Jupiter his thunderbolts—undertook to avenge his gods. He promulgated an edict, which was posted in all the cities, ordering search to be made for Christians, and punishment to be inflicted upon them. A war of extermination began. It appeared at first to succeed, because even more skill than cruelty was employed in it. All the efforts of the proconsuls were directed towards obtaining acts of apostasy. “Tortures,” says Saint Cyprian, “were continuous; they were not planned to give the crown, but to exhaust the power of endurance.”² Accordingly, apostasies were numerous. “To save his life, the son gave up the father, the father denounced the son.” “At Carthage the greater number of the brethren deserted at the first threats of the enemy. They did not wait to be questioned, but to preserve the wealth which held their souls captive, they hastened voluntarily to sacrifice to idols; they implored the magistrates to receive them on the instant to burn the impure incense, and not to put off until the morrow that which was to make their eternal ruin sure.” At Alexandria the same scenes took place, and at Smyrna, Rome, and throughout the Empire. Even bishops were seen leading

¹ Origen (*Contra Celsum*, iii.) says that until the time of the great persecution under Decius, there was but “a very small number, easy to count,” of Christians put to death.

² Saint Cyprian, *Ep.* 8, 52, 63, and his *De Lapsis*; Euseb., *Hist. eccl.* vi. 39, 41; Gregory of Nyssa, in his *Life of Gregory Thaumaturgus*; Tillemont, iii. 326–345.



THE EMPEROR DECIUS (STATUE OF THE CAPITOL).

their entire congregations into apostasy. Trophimus of Arles himself accompanied the Christians to pagan altars. Others, with money, bought toleration: the *libellatii* were very numerous. These weaknesses are in human nature, and we have no cause to wonder that Christianity, as it extended, lost something of its early virtue.

However, the persecution of Decius seems not to have been as severe as it has been represented.¹ A sentence of death was not always inevitable. Some were despoiled of their goods; others condemned to exile, or thrown into prison. Babylas of Antioch and Alexander of Jerusalem, of very advanced age, could not support the rigors of imprisonment, and died in consequence. The most formidable, because at that time the most famous, of the Christians, Origen, was loaded with chains and threatened with the stake; but “the man of steel” betrayed no weakness. The torturers were wearied sooner than their victim; he was set at liberty, and lived four years longer.²

As the persecution had been publicly announced, many had time to escape. The most conspicuous leaders, Cyprian of Carthage, Dionysius of Alexandria, and Gregory Thaumaturgus, avoided the peril, quitting their episcopal cities, and taking refuge in some adjacent retreat, whence they could communicate with the faithful. It must have been easy for many others to place themselves in shelter. Of these fugitives some went among the Barbarians, others fled into the desert; and thus, amid persecutions, originated that monastic order which was itself to be the instrument of many future persecutions.

The martyrologies enumerate in this period a considerable number of martyrs; but serious authors dare not guarantee the authenticity of these *Acts*, filled with anachronisms and marvellous legends, like that of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, who, being

¹ Except in Egypt, where there was doubtless a governor particularly bitter against the Christians. In Alexandria, a popular riot had cost the lives of several of them before the arrival of the edict of Decius (Euseb., *Hist. eccl.* vi. 41). After the publication of the edict there were many apostasies and a certain number of martyrs. However, Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria at this time, mentions as martyred after the edict but nine men and four women (*Ibid.*). There must have been more.

² Origen, who was called Ἀδαμάντιος (Euseb., *Hist. eccl.* vi. 14), was at that time sixty-five years of age. He had recently written (between 245 and 249) his great work against Celsus, the Λόγος ἀληθής. Saint Cyprian says of the African confessors: *Nec cessistis suppliciis, sed vobis potius supplicia cesserunt* (*Ep.* 10).

shut up in a cave and walled in, emerged, living, two centuries after. We should not, however, fall into the opposite extreme, concluding from these pious frauds that there were very few condemnations to death. The edict of Decius reveals an intention on the part of the imperial government to strike a heavy blow;¹ a few leaders of the Church, bishops or teachers, and, as was always the case, many of the common people and slaves, perished. The most illustrious victims were Saint Saturninus, first bishop of Toulouse, Pionius, priest in Smyrna, who by his sacrifice made up for the apostasy of his bishop,² and Fabian, bishop of Rome, whose see remained vacant a year and a half. Pionius was crucified, and with him a Marcionite, — the heretics having their martyrs also. If the latter had told us their story, they would have added glorious chapters to the great and terrible epic of persecution, which across the centuries has kept burning in men's minds the flame of self-devotion, and even to this day incites to noble sacrifices.

The storm let loose upon the Church by him whom Lactantius calls "the accursed beast," lasted in reality but a few months. At the end of the year 250 peace had been almost entirely restored to the Christians, and before the death of Decius all the imprisoned confessors were set free.³ The Emperor had quite other work to do than torturing these inoffensive men on account of their belief. The invading Goths compelled him to occupy himself less with his gods than with the Empire, and he left his undertaking incomplete. The persecution had been no more successful than the censorship of morals; but the latter had been only a harmless whim, while the former had caused tears and blood to be shed, and their trace still rests upon the persecutor's name.

¹ Saint Cyprian (*Ep. 52*) speaks of the hatred of Decius towards the bishops. See, in the *Life of Gregory Thaumaturgus*, the severity of the orders sent to the governors to bring back the Christians, $\tau\hat{\eta}$ $\tau\hat{\omega}\tau$ $\delta\alpha\mu\circ\omega\tau$ $\lambda\alpha\tau\rho\epsilon\iota\alpha$. . . $\phi\circ\beta\varphi$ $\tau\epsilon$ $\kappa\alpha$ $\tau\hat{\eta}$ $\tau\hat{\omega}\tau$ $\alpha\kappa\iota\sigma\mu\alpha\tau\hat{\omega}\tau$ $\dot{\alpha}\nu\alpha\gamma\kappa\eta$.

² A fugitive slave perished with him.

³ If the *Acts of Saint Acacius* are authentic (Bollandists, March 10), Decius himself ordered the release of that bishop.

II.—RAVAGES OF THE BARBARIANS IN THE EMPIRE; VALERIAN;
PERSECUTION OF THE CHRISTIANS (251–260).

IN the critical position where the army stood after the defeat and death of Decius, it had neither time nor disposition to await



C. VIBIUS TREBONIANUS GALLUS.¹

a decision of the Senate. Gallus easily obtained the purple from his legions.² In order to free himself from the suspicion of having

¹ Bust of the Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 73.

² C. Vibius Trebonianus Gallus, born in 206 according to Aur. Victor, and in 194 according to the *Alexandrian Chronicle*. He was perhaps an African, a native of the Island of Meninx.

betrayed his Emperor, he took for colleague Hostilianus, the second son of Decius, and he caused his own son Volusianus, whom he made Caesar,¹ to marry a daughter of the late Emperor. Not long after, however, Hostilianus died, or was killed. A disgraceful



VOLUSIANUS, SON OF TREBONIANUS GALLUS.²

treaty had permitted the Goths to recross the Danube unmolested, taking with them their booty and their captives, and the promise of an annual subsidy in gold. But they had found the Empire so rich, and at the same time so feeble, that it was to be expected that they would soon return. There was, in fact, talk of new

¹ Eckhel, vii. 365. After the death of Hostilianus, his brother-in-law was made Augustus (*cibid.* 566), and reigned from November, 251, to February, 254.

² Bust of the Capitol, Hall of the Emperors.

encounters in Pannonia, which the governor, Aemilianus, a Mauretanian, was able to turn to his own advantage. These slight successes encouraged his troops, whose military pride had been wounded by the treaty of Gallus with the Goths. The distribution among the soldiers of the money sent to pay the Gothic tribute won them completely, and the troops proclaimed their general.¹ Pestilence and famine desolated the provinces, without interrupting the effeminate life Gallus was leading at Rome, and the people



HOSTILIANUS,
SECOND SON OF DECIUS.²



VOLUSIANUS,
SON OF GALLUS.³



TREBONIANUS GALLUS.⁴

held him responsible for these disasters. Aemilianus penetrated unopposed into Italy,⁵ as far as the city of Terni, where he met his opponent. A promise of money to the troops of Gallus decided the defection. The Emperor was killed with his son (February, 254), and the victor had a few days of royalty.

This vain person⁶ promised the Senate to renew the glory of the great reigns, to leave to the Conspect Fathers the administration of the state, while he himself, undertaking the hardships of war, would go and drive out the Barbarians from the northern and eastern portions of the Empire: and he allowed himself at once to be represented on medals with the attributes of Hercules the Victorious, and Mars the Avenger.

Even before the death of Gallus, Valerian, whom this Emperor had employed to bring to his succor the legions of Gaul and

¹ About the close of August, 253 (Eckhel, vii. 371).

² C[aius] VALENS HOTIL[ianus] (*sic* MES[ius]) QVINTVS N[obilis] C[aeser]. (Large bronze.)

³ Volusianus, son of Gallus, wearing a radiate crown (aureus). IMP[erator] CAE[sar] C[aius] VIB[ius] VOLVSIANO[s] (*sic*) AVG[ustus]. (Gold coin).

⁴ Trebonianus Gallus, laurel crowned. (Bronze medallion.)

⁵ About the end of 253. In this case of difficult chronology we follow Eckhel, who has learnedly discussed the grounds for it.

⁶ M. Aemilius Aemilianus (Or-Henzen, No. 5,542).

Germany, had been by them (253) decorated with the purple in Rhaetia. Rome had, therefore, three Emperors at once. The disaster of Terni removed one of these. Valerian had no need to fight against the other. The soldiers of his opponent, feeling themselves the weaker party, and possibly offended at the advances made by their Emperor to the Senate, sent to the new Augustus the head of Aemilianus. The unfortunate man had been murdered near Spoleto, after a reign of not quite three months.¹

We find in this year a prefect of Rome who had the title of *comes domesticorum*, — a new designation, and destined to be very conspicuous. Already we have seen *duces* and *praesidentes*; at the great council of war held in Byzantium in 258 the Emperor will be surrounded by them. Also the *amicus principis* (the Emperor's counsellor) becomes a functionary,— one, Clarus, was made prefect of Illyria and the Gallic provinces;

and during the reign now beginning, there were, so to speak, two empires,— that of the East, where Valerian was waging war, and that of the West, over which his son Gallienus ruled as Augustus. The elements of the approaching reform were in preparation.

We are about to enter upon the period known in history as that of the Thirty Tyrants; that is to say, a time of the most horrible confusion. We shall pass quickly over it, as in some dangerous or malarial locality the traveller hastens his steps.

The disorder existing in the state appears in the narratives which describe it. Even the chronology is uncertain, for the reason that the Emperors succeed one another too quickly for each to have time to issue the coins which fix our dates. The one thing plainly visible is that the whole Barbarian world fell upon the Empire: the Franks overran Gaul; the Alemanni crossed the Rhine; the Goths or the Scythians the Danube and the Euxine; the Persians the Tigris and the Euphrates.

Valerian was an upright man, who had with good reason been

¹ Eutropius says that he was killed *tertio mense*.

² Aemilianus as Mars. MARTI PROPVG[na]T[ori].

³ Laurelled head of Valerian. IMP. C. P. LIC. VALERIANVS AVG.



SILVER COIN.²



LARGE BRONZE.³

made the censor of others, because he had always been his own censor,—a man very well worthy of the second rank, but not of the first.¹ He endeavored to relieve the public distress; he listened willingly to advice, and advanced men of worth. Claudius, Aureolus, Postumus, Ingenuus, Aurelian, were all distinguished by him, and Probus owed to this Emperor his first honors.³ But the conduct of affairs required at a period of such extreme disorder something more than good intentions; there was needed good judgment, mental activity, clear and active mind, firmness, and perseverance,—none of which qualities Valerian possessed.

Moreover, he came to power too late; old age is the time for repose, and not for duties which require energy both of mind and body.⁴

To oppose Gallus, Aemilianus had brought into Italy the best troops from Pannonia, while to assist him Valerian had led thither the flower of the Rhenish legions. The Barbarians, who had not failed to observe this weakening of the garrisons of the frontier, attempted a new assault. Valerian had the wisdom to see that alone he could not possibly repel so many attacks. Instead, however, of taking as his colleague one of the many valiant and experienced generals at this time in the Roman army, he chose his son Gallienus, who was too young to possess authority and too effeminate to employ it well if he had had it.⁵ Father and son divided the defence. Valerian undertook the East. Gallienus the West (255); we shall see that both were incapable at their imperial trade.

Gallienus was still entirely devoted to pleasure, and passed

¹ P. Licinius Valerianus was of an old family, and at this time sixty-three years of age. He had held office as tribune for the first time while Gallus was yet living, in the year 253.

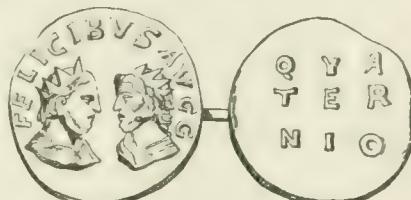
² Valerian and his son Gallienus, each wearing a radiate crown.

³ Treb. Pollio, *Tyr. trig.* 20; Vopiscus, *Aur.* 8, 9, 11–15; *Prob.* 3–5.

⁴ Zosimus is very severe upon Valerian (*i. 36*).

⁵ Reverse of a silver medallion, with the legend: *VIRTVS GALLIE[ni]*. Gallienus on horseback, treading down an enemy.

⁶ All the coins of Publius Licinius Egnatius Gallienus give him the title of Augustus, not one that of Caesar.



QUATERNIO OF COPPER ALLOY.²



SILVER MEDALLION.⁵

his time in amusements of all kinds.¹ His father had but little confidence in this boy,² and yet dared not give him as counsellor and guide Aurelian, whose severity seemed too great for the time, and especially too great to be endured by Gallienus. Valerian therefore placed the young man in charge of Postumus, a skilful

soldier, — appointing the latter *dux* of the Rhenish frontier and governor of Gaul. Although the Romans still possessed their strongholds along the Rhine, the Frankish marauders always found along the extensive frontier some ill-guarded point through which their bands could slip into the province.



THE STRAITS OF HERCULES.

When they had once crossed the line of the *castra*,³ there were before them only disarmed populations filled with terror at the sight of these yellow-haired warriors whose weapons never missed their mark; and the invaders went on across rivers and over mountains, for the pleasure of seeing, of slaying, and of setting villas and cities on fire. The Pyrenees did not arrest them, nor the Straits of Hercules; and the affrighted Moors beheld these sons of another world, whose destructive instincts the Vandals would later reveal to them. Among the Spanish towns pillaged or destroyed by the Franks, Eusebius names the great city of Tarragona,⁴ in which a century and a half did not suffice to efface the traces of this devastation. Ilerda, in the time of Ausonius, was only a heap of ruins;⁵ and in the fifth century Orosius speaks of

¹ Never had entertainments been more numerous than in the reign of Valerian and Gallienus (Eckhel, iv. 422).

² *Puer.* The word is in a letter quoted by Vopiscus (*Aur.* 9), of which the authenticity has been called in question, though upon insufficient grounds. It is true that Aurelius Victor makes Gallienus thirty-five years of age at the time of his accession to the Empire.

³ They seem to have come into Gaul by the valley of the Moselle, where have been found many coins of this period, which doubtless were buried at their approach.

⁴ Eusebius places the taking of Tarragona by the Franks in the year 263. According to Orosius (vii. 22) they remained a dozen years in Spain (256–268).

⁵ At the end of the fourth century (*Ep.* xxv. 5, 3).

many Spanish cities laid waste. If, as we have already said in relating the reign of Augustus, the Empire had been able to give the provincial assemblies a permanent existence, and the municipal militia of the first century¹ had endured until the third, Spain could easily have repelled this handful of invaders. It was the isolation of the cities which prevented them from organizing for the common defence.

Gallienus cared little for these disasters; the sun of Spain and of Africa, and civilization, whose contact is deadly to Barbarians when they are not strong enough to destroy it, were sure, he thought, soon to get the better of these bold marauders. He contented himself with detaining the bulk of the nation on the Rhine by many small encounters and finally by the means so often employed,—that of buying over a Barbarian chief to guard the frontiers for him; after which he assumed the name of Germanicus and caused himself to be represented on coins as the conqueror of two rivers, the Mein and the Rhine, of which the one protected Gaul against the Germans, and the other opened Germany to a Roman invasion.³ Aurelian distinguished himself in these severe campaigns. He destroyed a Frankish corps near Mayence, and three lines of a song of his soldiers have been preserved,—

Mille, mille, mille, mille, mille decollavimus.

Mille Sarmatas, mille Francos occidimus,

Mille, mille, mille, mille Persas quaerimus.⁴



COIN OF COPPER ALLOY.²

In 258 an insurrection of the legions of Pannonia called Gallienus into that province; it had hardly been repressed when the Alemanni, not finding it possible to get through into Gaul, where the frontier was well guarded by Postumus, threw themselves upon Italy, and advanced as far as Ravenna. In the time of Aurelian they made it their boast that forty thousand Alemannic cavalry had

¹ Vol. IV. chap. lxvii.

² Gallienus conquering the Mein and the Rhine.

³ Eckhel, vii. 385, 390–91. Postumus issued similar coins (*Ibid.* 447).

⁴ Vopiscus, *Aur.* 6. The date of this event is uncertain. Tillemont places it too early,—in 242; for Valerian's letter to the urban prefect (*Ibid.* 9), in which the Emperor calls him *liberator Illyrici, Galliarum restitutor*, and makes allusion to the important services which had lately brought Aurelian into notice, was written in 257.

watered their horses at the river Po, and had ravaged a large part of the peninsula.¹ It was the first time since the Cimbrian invasion that

GOLD MEDALLION.²

the Germans touched, otherwise than as captives, the sacred soil of old Italy. The Alps, then, were no longer an insurmountable barrier, and the fear of the Gallic "tumults," which four victorious centuries had dispelled, broke out afresh. Rome was in alarm. In the absence of the Emperors, the Senate levied troops and armed the citizens: it was the first worthy act done by them for many years. The Allemanni, doubtless less numerous³ than they afterwards represented themselves to be, and already laden with booty, made a disorderly retreat towards the Alps. Gallienus had time to arrive from Pannonia, and he defeated some detachments near Milan (258 or 259). In the hope of preventing the return of similar incursions, he employed upon the Danube the policy which had seemed to succeed upon the Rhine,—that of alliances bought by gifts or honors; he married the daughter of a king of the Marcomanni, Pipa by name, and seated her beside the Empress Cornelia Salonina. The fair-haired German became the Emperor's favorite, and supreme in the palace, where Salonina soothed herself with empty honors and the study of philosophy under the leader of the new Alexandrian school.⁵

COIN OF COPPER ALLOY.⁴

¹ Dexippus, *Excerpta de Legat.*, in the *Scriptores Historiae Byzantinae*; Orosius, vii. 22.

² P. M. TR. P. VIII. COS. IIII. P. P. The Emperor, wearing the praetexta, holding a wand in the left hand and a patera in the right, sacrifices at a lighted altar. Cf. Mowat, *Trésor de Monaco*, p. 9. This medallion is regarded with great doubt by M. Muret on account of the contradiction between COS. III. on the reverse and COS. V. on the face. Reverse of a gold medallion of Gallienus found at Monaco in 1879.

³ Zonaras says three hundred thousand; but he adds that Gallienus defeated them with ten thousand men.

⁴ The Empress Salonina, seated, holding a sceptre and an olive-branch. Reverse of a coin of Salonina, with the legend: AVG. IN PACE.

⁵ Pipa, notwithstanding the affection of Gallienus, remained only a concubine. There is neither medal nor inscription bearing her name, while Salonina is always called Augusta. On the coins of Gallienus are seen the heads of the husband and wife. There exists a coin of Salonina with the Christian legend, *in pace*. I do not, however, believe that Salonina resolutely entered the Church, where she would not have been received without a conspicuous repudiation of heathen rites; and the Empress who built a temple to Segetia, the goddess of Harvests, certainly never made that abjuration. But inquisitive in respect to the ideas current in her time, and troubled by the disasters of the Empire and her own domestic unhappiness, doubtless the friend of Plotinus aspired to the peace which Christianity and

Without doubt an important law of Gallienus is due to the invasion of the Alemanni. The warlike zeal lately shown by the Senate disturbed him. A rescript prohibited to the Conscription Fathers military service, and they were forbidden to appear in an army or in a camp.¹ In the preceding chapter we have seen the results of this decision.

The Marcomanni and the Goths, with their allies the Carpae, the Boranae, and the Burgundii, caused Illyria, Macedonia, Thrace, and Greece to suffer the woes that the Franks had inflicted upon Gaul, and the Alemanni, upon Italy. All these provinces were desolated by devastations, murders, and a multitude of small engagements, of which we know neither the place nor the date, but in which the generals gained reputation and the selfish affection of a few soldiers, and later the dangerous honor of being by them elected to the Empire, — a formidable favor, which was equivalent to a death-sentence with short reprieve. One of these generals, Aurelian, was to keep the purple for five years, and to be a great ruler.² In a letter of 257 to the urban prefect, Valerian calls him

the neo-Platonists promised after death. Her husband, who promulgated the first edict of toleration in favor of the Christians, is believed to have done this from consideration for the Empress, who, it is thought, inclined him to benevolence towards the adherents of the new faith. See M. de Witte's *Mémoire sur l'impératrice Salomine*, 1852.

¹ Aur. Victor, 33; cf. *id.* 27. From that time forward the *praefectus legionis* took the place of legionary legate.

² Museum of the Capitol.

³ Another, Valens, who was to be Emperor for a very brief time, appears to have com-



THE EMPRESS SALONINA.²

the liberator of Illyria, and says that he had cleared this province of Barbarians. For their food these hordes drove along an immense number of cattle; Aurelian took so many from them that he was able to distribute among several Thracian towns a great number of oxen and horses. He even sent to Rome, for one of Valerian's



ROMAN AUXILIARY ON HORSEBACK, KILLING AN ENEMY.¹

villas, five hundred choice slaves, two thousand cows, two thousand mares, ten thousand sheep, and fifteen thousand goats.²

The circle of barbarism which enveloped the Empire was now closing in on every side, and Asia, as well as Europe, had its invasions.

The garrisons of the Roman posts, established, as we have seen, along the southern shores of the Euxine as far as Sebastopolis,³ at the foot of the Caucasus, had been reduced, in order to furnish soldiers for the continual revolutions of the Empire; and seditions which the Antonines would have prevented placed the kingdom pelled the Gauls to raise the siege of Thessalonica. At least, in Amm. Marcellinus (xxi. 16), he has the surname of Thessalonicens.

¹ Monument found near Mayence (Lindenschmit, *op. cit. pl. vii. No. 3*).

² Vopiscus, *Aur.* 10.

³ See Vol. V. pp. 25 *et seq.*

of the Bosphorus at the mercy of its new neighbors.¹ The Cimmerians gave up their vessels to the Goths, the Alans, and the Heruli; and these extemporized pirates were carried by the sailors of the Bosphorus "across the inhospitable sea" as far as the



CIMMERIAN BOSPHORUS: JEWELS FOUND IN THE TOMB OF A PRIESTESS OF CYBELE.²

Asiatic coasts. They seized upon Pityus, and then upon the great city of Trebizond, where three centuries of prosperity had heaped up immense wealth, which a numerous garrison was not able to protect.³

¹ The kings of the Bosphorus put on their coins the effigy of the reigning emperor: Decius, Gallus, Volusianus, Hostilianus, Aemilianus, Gallienus, Odenathus, Probus, and so on. Cf. Eckhel, iii. 306, and Cary, *Hist. des rois du Bosph.* pp. 76-78. But these kings were now at the mercy of their Barbarian neighbors. Accordingly, a gap of several years in the coins of Rhescuporis IV. announces the troubles by which a Barbarian usurper, Ininthimevus, profited. Phareanuses, who seems to have reigned but a short time about the year 253, has also a name of doubtful aspect. A Rhescuporis VII. reigned from 254 to 266, and probably longer (*Trésor de numism.* p. 63).

² See Vol. III. p. 120, a pendant found in the same tomb.

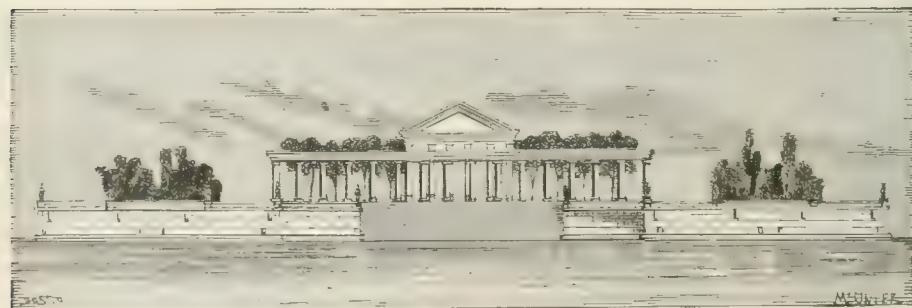
³ There were two expeditions: the first, which failed, probably in 255; the second and successful attempt, in 257 (*Zosimus*, i. 32, 33).

The rumor of this important capture fired the ardor of the Goths of the Danube. They obliged their Roman prisoners to construct vessels, in which they sailed along the coast, while the main body of the invading army, crossing the river, traversed all Thrace undisturbed, and arriving in the neighborhood of Byzantium, found



ISLAND AND SANCTUARY OF APOLLO, IN THE RHYNDACUS.¹ (PRESENT CONDITION.)

on the shore a great multitude of fishermen, who consented to lend their little boats,—without doubt for the sake of sharing in the plunder. “From Chalcedon to the temple at the entrance of the Thracian Bosphorus,” there were forces more considerable than



ISLAND AND SANCTUARY OF APOLLO, IN THE RHYNDACUS.¹ (RESTORATION BY GUILLAUME.)

those of the Barbarians; but the Romans, seized with terror, fled, and the Goths entered Chalcedon, Nicomedeia, the future capital of Diocletian, Nicæa, Cius, Apameia, Prusa, and Apollonia, which its temple of Apollo did not protect, built upon an island in a beautiful lake formed and traversed by the Rhyndaeus. Cyzicus escaped because the invaders could not cross the swollen river.

¹ Lebas and Waddington, *Voy. archéol. en Grèce et en Asie Min.: Architecture*, pl. 1, 2.

All Bithynia was sacked, and the Roman legions nowhere dared to make a stand against the enemy. The people fled in inexpressible alarm, and many of these wretched creatures, among whom we are forced to enumerate some of the Christians, took advantage of this immense disorganization to pillage in their turn (early in the year 258). The poor Jacquerie of France in the Middle Ages, yielding in the presence of similar disasters to a savage despair, said: "The devil is unchained; let us do our worst." Three centuries later, by the ruins they left behind them, the road the Goths traversed could be made out. "They carried back into their country immense booty," says Zosimus, "and they gave great honors to Chrysogonus, who had advised this expedition."¹

The preceding year Valerian had held at Byzantium a great council of war, in presence of the officers of the palace and of the army. We have the order of precedence in this assembly, and give it to show the new dignities that were coming into existence. At the right of the Emperor were seated one of the consuls, the praetorian prefect, and the governor of the East; on his left, the *dux* of the Scythian frontier, the Egyptian prefect, the *dux* of the Oriental frontier, the prefect of the Eastern annona, the *duces* of Illyricum and Thrace, and lastly the *dux* of the Rhaetian border. The foolish chronicler, who had the opportunity to read the report of this session, does not make known to us the serious deliberations which filled it; he contents himself with saying that Valerian decreed on this occasion extraordinary commendation to Aurelian for recent victories in Illyria over Gothic and Sarmatian bands.²

Where was the conqueror of the Franks and Goths at the time of the disasters which have just been described? Doubtless at Antioch with Valerian. This Emperor did nothing to prevent or arrest the misfortunes from which Bithynia suffered. He merely sent a general to Byzantium to guard that important point.

¹ Jordanes (*De Gothorum gestis*, 20) says that the Goths burned Ilium and the temple of Diana at Ephesus; he adds that in his time (the sixth century) there were still to be seen at Chaledon the ruins that they had caused. Zosimus (i. 35) does not say who this Chrysogonus was; but it is apparent that these Barbarians were not too barbarous to take advantage of traitors, and collect the information necessary to the success of their expeditions.

² Vopiscus, *Aur.* 15. Valerian gave him at this time not the consulship, as Vopiseus says, but the consular ornaments. Inscriptions and coins prove that Aurelian was consul for the first time in 271. (See Eckhel, vii. 479.)

But the Goths had not as yet formed the design of establishing themselves permanently in the Empire, and their retreat was doubtless caused less by the approach of the Emperor, who advanced into Cappadocia, than by the desire to place in safety before the stormy season¹ the booty with which their vessels were loaded,—a booty whose magnitude and value surpassed all their expectations.²

COIN OF VALERIAN.³

The Gothic inroads were probably connected with another invasion, which seemed likely to drive the Romans out of Asia; namely, that of Sapor. At least we see that the Barbarians made their attack first upon the cities where the roads from Armenia came in, of

which country the Persians were taking possession; and in occupying Cappadocia, Valerian seems to have had the design of placing himself between the two allies.

If it be said that this is ascribing to these savage tribes too extensive combinations, we must remember the embassies sent by the Dacians to the Arsacidae in the time of Trajan. The Amales required no great efforts of political intelligence to understand and follow the traditions of the Decebalus.⁴

Sapor had assassinated Chosroes,⁵ the king of Armenia, and had placed one of his own partisans upon the throne. For more than a quarter of a century this country was like a Persian province,—to the great grief of its inhabitants; for the Persians perse-

¹ The ancients were reluctant to venture upon the Euxine earlier than May, or later than September.

² Sozomenes (*Hist. eccl.* ii. 6) and Philostorges (*Hist. eccl.* ii. 5) say that among the captives were priests, who converted multitudes of Barbarians on the banks of the Rhine and the Danube. The work of conversion was possibly beginning among the Goths at this period; in 325 a bishop from this nation sat in the Council of Nicaea: but in Western Germany there were no Christians, before Clovis, among the Franks whom Sozomenus seems to designate, and the conversion of the Alemanni took place later.

³ Reverse of a coin of Valerian, struck at Antioch, in Caria. ANTIOXEΩΝ. Bridge over the Meander; underneath, a couchant river and an equestrian statue. (Bronze.)

⁴ Vol. V. p. 238. Pliny arrested in Bithynia an emissary from the Decebalus to Chosroes. In the reign of Marcus Aurelius the powerful league of the Marcomanni was formed, in 165, shortly after the great successes of Vologeses in Armenia and over the Syrian legions.

⁵ Tiridates, the son of Chosroes, was saved by the satraps and sent to Rome, and in 287 Diocletian placed him upon the throne of his fathers (*Moses Chorenus, Hist. Armeniaca.* ii. 69–75).

cuted all those who followed the national customs, destroying all buildings of a sacred character, temples of the Sun and Moon: and the sacred fire of Ormuzd constantly burning upon altars, was a reminder of the triumph of a hostile race and a foreign religion. Thus another bulwark of the Empire, and one of its best defences, was destroyed.

The possession of Armenia by the Persians in fact rendered easy their conquest of Mesopotamia, where Sapor took the fortified towns Nisibis and Carrhae. The situation, therefore, was very threatening, and it was due to those who, in less than forty years, had caused, either directly or indirectly, ten military revolutions.

The Romans, remaining masters of Edessa, barred to the Persian army one of the roads into Asia Minor; and the Cilician Gates, without doubt well guarded at that time, closed the other. Sapor, with his inefficient infantry,² was not able to force a passage through the mountains, and he could not hinder a Roman army from coming down into Syria; Valerian, indeed, entered Antioch without fighting. The appearance of the Goths in Bithynia obliged him to return into Asia Minor, "where," says Zosimus. "he did nothing save vex the people as he passed through." The retreat of the Barbarians permitted him at last to leave Cappadocia and march upon Edessa, which, for many years blockaded, still held out. But his troops had suffered greatly from pestilence; and a defeat which he experienced, together with the clamors of the army, decided him to negotiate. Sapor refusing to receive envoys from the Emperor, the latter requested a personal interview, repeating the error of Crassus. When the astute Barbarian saw the Emperor come to him attended by only a small guard, he caused Valerian to be surrounded by the Persian cavalry and made prisoner (260).³ He lived six years in captivity, enduring

SAPOR I.¹

¹ Bust of the king, wearing the diadem and placed on a lion's head surmounted by two wings. Intaglio on sardonyx (20 millim. by 18). (*Cabinet de France*, No. 1,347.)

² In respect to the Persian infantry, see Amm. Marcellinus, xxiii. 6.

³ This is the account given by Zosimus (i. 3). Zonaras speaks of a battle and a defeat. He adds that there was a tradition of a mutiny in the Roman army which had caused Valerian to seek refuge with Sapor, πρὸς τὸν Σαπωρῆν κατέφυγεν.

shameful ill-treatment ; and after his death,¹ his skin, tanned, stuffed, and colored red, was hung from the roof of the most important temple in Persia, where it remained for several centuries.² The rocks of Nakéh-Roustem and of Schahpûr retained the story of this great Roman humiliation ; and the horsemen there seen treading legionaries under their horses' feet, perhaps gave rise to the legend that Sapor used the Roman Emperor as a horse-block to mount by.³

The Persian king took advantage of the consternation which this event caused in the Roman army to endeavor to seize the Empire as well as the Emperor. Guided by the traitor Cyriades, he penetrated into Syria. One day, as the inhabitants of Antioch were witnessing a performance in the theatre, one of them cried out suddenly : "I am dreaming, or else the Persians are upon us!" A few moments later, arrows began to fall amongst the crowd, and the city was pitilessly sacked.⁴ Terror again seized upon all these provinces. It was asserted that Emesa had been saved by its divinity.⁵ Probably the great mass of the Persian forces was in the northern part of the province, and only a detachment, easily to be resisted, was sent to the holy city ; or else Sapor, through policy, respected a temple venerated by all the nations in this region.

All the attention of the Persians was now turned towards Asia Minor ; that being conquered, the rest would fall. They traversed unopposed the passes of Cilicia, took the great city of Tarsus, and besieged Caesarea, the capital of Cappadocia, which is believed to have had at this time a population of four hundred

¹ Agathias even says that he was flayed alive.

² What is legend, and what is truth in this story ? It is not easy to say. A letter from Constantine to Sapor II., quoted by Eusebius (*Life of Const.* iv. 11), and the words of Galerius to Narses, related by Peter Patricius (*Excerpta de Legat.* in the *Collectanea of Const.* VII.), attest that Valerian certainly suffered the most humiliating of captivities ; it lasted, according to the *Chronicle of Alexandria*, until 269. But Treb. Pollio (*Tyr. trig.* 14) places the death of Valerian before that of Odenathus, consequently in 266 : . . . *Iratum fuisse reipublicae Deum credo, qui, interfecto Valeriano, noluit Odenatum reservari.*

³ The bas-relief of Darabgerd shows Sapor treading under his horse's feet a prostrate man, on whose head seems to be a fragment of a laurel-wreath (Flandin, *Perse ancienne*, pl. xxxiii.). But this was a symbol of victory much in use among the Persians, and we are not to conclude that this sculpture represents a real action.

⁴ Amm. Marcellinus (xxiii. 5) places this in the reign of Gallienus ; that is, after the captivity of Valerian.

⁵ John Malalas.

thousand inhabitants. The city held out for a long time, until a prisoner, being put to the torture, revealed a weak point in the defences, through which the besiegers by night entered the place. They had been ordered to seize the brave Demosthenes, who had directed the defence; but he cut his way through on horseback, killing many of the enemy, and made his escape.¹ Two years earlier than this the Persians would have been able from Cappadocia to reach the Goths, masters of Bithynia. But the Barbarians of the South did not need aid from the Barbarians of the North to reach the Propontis and the Sea of the Cyclades. Terror went before them. "They might easily," says Zosimus, "have made themselves masters of the whole of Asia, if they had not been in haste to enjoy their victory at home and to carry off their booty."² After their departure the Syrians took revenge upon the traitor Cyriades,³ who had assumed the title of Augustus, and burned him alive.

It is said that when Sapor announced his victory to all the neighboring or allied nations, the latter, terrified at this great triumph, concealed their fears under the counsels of philosophic moderation which they sent back in reply.⁴ The son of Valerian, however, had no need of the consolations of wisdom to appease a grief which he did not feel. "I knew," he said, "that my father was mortal; besides, he has fallen like a brave man;" and considering him as already dead, Gallienus apotheosized him. Possibly these words might have been pardoned to a son who had followed them by energetic acts to avenge his father and the Empire; but this affectation of stoicism was only unfilial cowardice.

The reign of Valerian is marked by the most cruel persecution that the Church had yet endured. When the pagan inhabitants of the Empire beheld Barbarians threatening the very heart of Italy and ravaging two thirds of the provinces, their anger was turned — as often before in cases of public calamity — against this foreign people living among them, indifferent to their griefs, and refusing to take arms against the common enemy. As if entering reluctantly

¹ Zonaras, xii. 23.

² Amm. Marcellinus (xxiii. 5) also speaks of this precipitate departure.

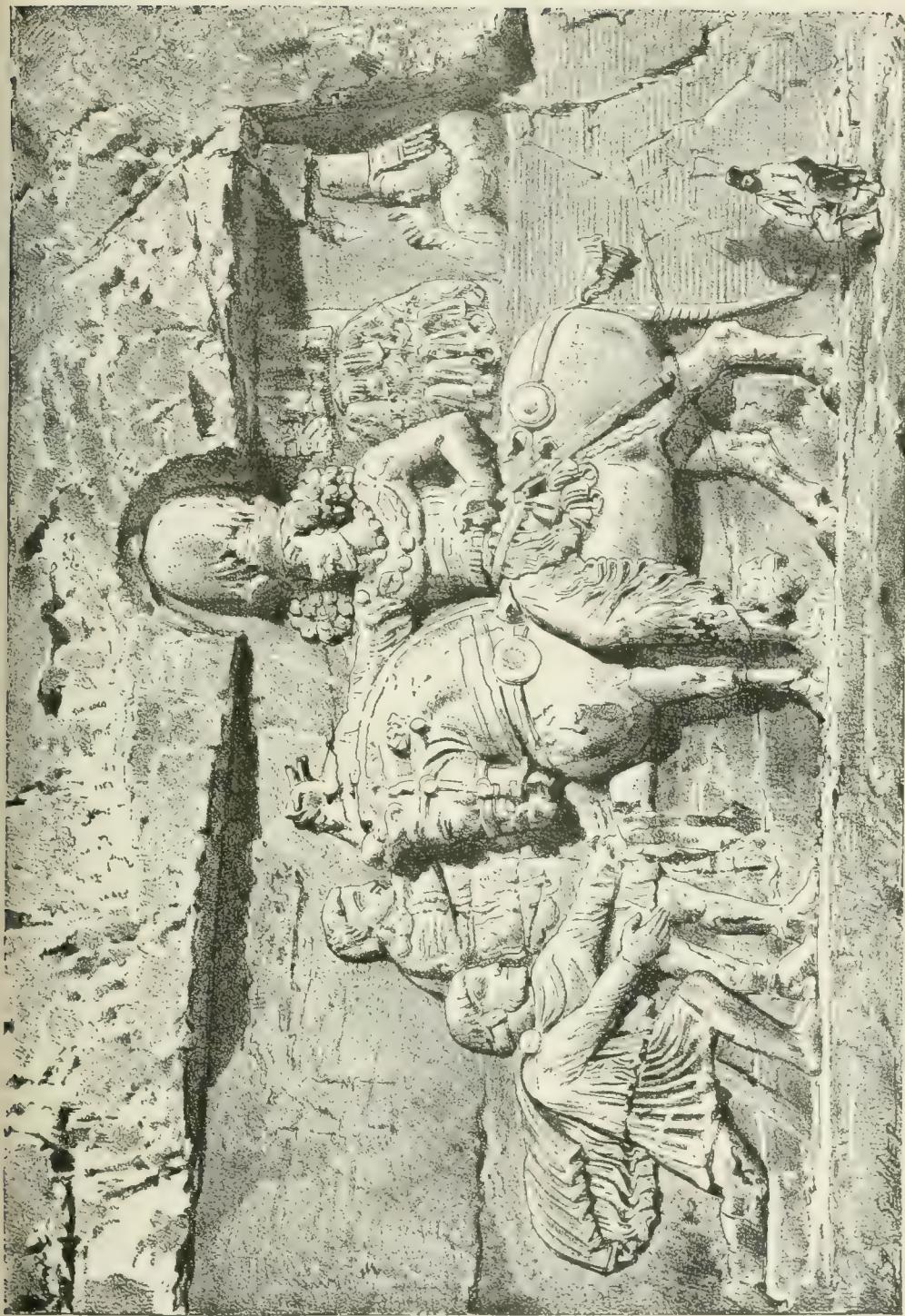
³ Or Mariades. Cf. *Fragm. hist. Graec.* v. 192 (Didot).

⁴ These letters must be fabrications, however, for the Persian archives certainly were not open to the writers of the *Augustan History*.

upon the career of persecution, the Emperors in their first letters simply forbade assemblages of Christians, and denied them access to their cemeteries; no one was required to renounce the worship of Christ, but all were ordered to conform to the Roman cult. — which was, however, equivalent to apostasy; and, finally, the contumacious were as yet punished with exile only. The acts of Cyprian exhibit this first phase of persecution, which does not seem to have struck outside of the clergy.

"In the fourth consulship of the Emperor Valerianus and the third of Gallienus, the third day before the kalends of September" (30th August, 257), "in the audience-hall at Carthage, the proconsul Paternus said to the Bishop Cyprian: 'The most sacred Emperors Valerianus and Gallienus have deigned to address letters to me, in which they order all persons not professing the Roman religion to observe without delay all its ceremonies. I have therefore summoned you to ascertain your intentions. What answer have you to make?' The Bishop Cyprian replied: 'I am a Christian and a bishop. I know no other god than the one true God who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is. This God we Christians serve, to Him we pray night and day, for ourselves and for all men, and especially for the safety of the Emperors.' The proconsul said: 'Do you persist in this resolution?' The Bishop Cyprian replied: 'The goodwill that has once known God never changes.' The proconsul Paternus said: 'You may prepare, then, to go into exile in the city of Curubis: so Valerianus and Gallienus command.' The Bishop Cyprian replied: 'I am ready to go.' The proconsul Paternus said: 'The orders which I have received concern not only bishops, but also priests. I wish, therefore, to know the names of the priests dwelling in this city.' The Bishop Cyprian replied: 'Well and wisely have your laws prohibited giving information; I, therefore, cannot make known to you or give up to you those of whom you speak; you will find them in the cities where they dwell.' The proconsul Paternus said: 'It is my will that they appear before me to-day in this place.' Cyprian answered: 'The rules of our order forbid them to surrender themselves, and in this you cannot blame their conduct; but seek for them, and you will find them.' The proconsul Paternus said: 'Fear not; I will find them.' And he

VALFRIAN PROSTRATE BEFORE SAPOR, WHO IS ON HORSEBACK. BAS-RELIEF OF NAKKEH-ROUSTEM, UNDER THE TOMBS OF THE KINGS (ENVIRONS OF PERSEPOLIS). FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY M. DE LAFOY.



added: ‘The Emperors also forbid meetings in any place whatsoever, and the entering of cemeteries. Whoever shall violate

GALLIENUS.¹

this wise prohibition will be punished with death.’ The Bishop Cyprian: ‘Do whatever is commanded you.’”²

¹ Bust of the Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 76.

² Freppel, *Saint Cyprien*, pp. 477, 478, from the proconsular reports of the martyrdom of Saint Cyprian. Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, suffered no other penalty than exile into the Libyan desert, three days’ journey from Paraetonium (Euseb., *Hist. eccl.* vii. 11). Interrogated by the prefect of Egypt, he had made Saint Paul’s famous reply (*Acts* v. 29), which Polycrates of Ephesus had also repeated (*Hist. eccl.* v. 24), – a reply by which the social bond may at any time be broken: “We must obey God rather than men;” that is to say, a man’s own ideas, which

The successor of Paternus removed the sentence of exile decreed against Cyprian, and suffered him to reside outside the gates of Carthage in a house which belonged to the bishop. But the calamities of the Empire increased. Emperors who could not defend themselves, believed that they might obtain the assistance of Heaven by avenging their gods. In the middle of the year 258 Valerian sent to the Senate the following rescript:—

“Bishops, priests, and deacons shall be punished with death; senators, officers, and knights degraded and deprived of their goods. If they persist, death. Women of honorable birth shall be banished. Freedmen of the palace shall be sent as slaves to the Emperor’s domains.”¹

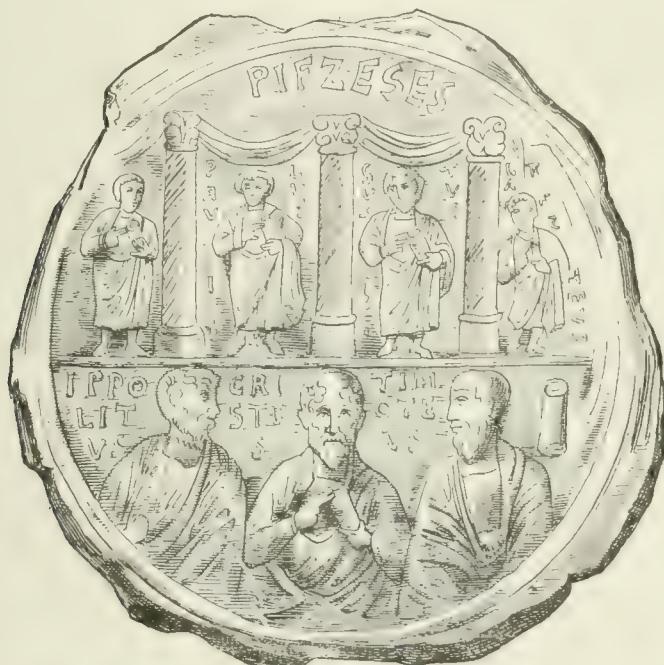
We will further give the last examination of Saint Cyprian, showing the general method of procedure against the martyrs.

“The proconsul Galerius Maximus said to Cyprian: ‘You are Thascius Cyprianus?’ The bishop answered: ‘I am.’ The proconsul said: ‘You are the bishop of these sacrilegious persons?’ ‘I am.’ ‘The most sacred Emperors have ordered you to sacrifice to the gods.’ ‘I shall not do so.’ ‘Reflect upon your conduct.’ ‘Do what you are ordered; in a thing so right, I have no occasion to deliberate.’ Galerius Maximus, after taking the advice of his council, expressed himself as follows: ‘You have long held sacrilegious opinions; you have brought many men into this impious conspiracy, thus placing yourselves in hostility towards the gods of Rome and the laws of religion; and the pious and most sacred Emperors Valerianus and Gallienus, Augusti, and the very illustrious Valerianus Caesar, have not been able to bring you back to the observance of their religious ceremonies. For this reason you, being the author of the most infamous crimes, and the standard-bearer of the sect, shall serve as an example to those whom you have led astray by your criminal machinations; your blood shall pay the penalty of the law.’ Having said this, he took his tablets and wrote the sentence which he had uttered aloud: ‘We condemn Thascius Cyprianus to be beheaded.’ The

he believes to come from divine revelation or inspiration, rather than the law of the land. In the case of the Christians, the state was in the wrong, and their resistance was legitimate; but the formula is dangerous, for it will not always be employed in protecting the rights which ought to be protected,—namely, those of conscience.

¹ Saint Cyprian, *Ep. 82, ad Successum.* The edict of Valerian is given there.

bishop said: 'God be praised!'"¹ The guards then led him away. Arriving at the place of execution, Cyprian took off his outer garment, knelt, and prayed some time. Then he gave his dalmatic to the deacons, himself bandaged his eyes, and directed his followers after his death to give to the executioner twenty-five gold pieces. The brethren held strips of cloth around him to collect the martyr's blood. The executioner trembled when he struck the



POPE SIXTUS AND THE DEACON LAWRENCE, ON A GILDED GLASS
FROM THE CATACOMBS.²

mortal blow. All the pagans must have trembled also when they witnessed these triumphant deaths (14th September, 258).

Cyprian was among the favored ones: his was the easiest death; others were burned alive, like the Bishop of Tarragona, or thrown to the wild beasts. Rome paid largely the debt of blood. Pope Sixtus II. was one of the first to perish. Being surprised in the catacombs while celebrating the holy mysteries, he was beheaded; and his deacon, Saint Lawrence, was burned at a slow fire. Wherever Christian communities had been established, many priests,

¹ Freppel, *Saint Cyprien*, pp. 490-491, from the proconsular reports.

² Roller, *op. cit.* pl. lxxvii. No. 2. Upon the legend, PIE ZESES, see Vol. VI. p. 588, n. 2

deacons, believers, and even women, perished. Novatian, who brought into the Church all the severity of his earlier master, the Stoic Zeno, was one of the victims, and possibly also Saint Dionysius, who evangelized the North of Gaul, and Polyeuctes, whom Corneille has made famous.¹

The Empire was rending itself with its own hands — as if famine, pestilence, and the Barbarians, who seemed to the Christians “to be let loose by God for this day of wrath,”² were not enough for its destruction!

Gallienus had one merit, — he understood that this persecution was unjust as well as useless; and as soon as he was sole master he ordered that their cemeteries, their possessions, and the freedom of their worship should be restored to the Christians (260).³ Thus there was one war the less in the Empire. Unhappily, many others still remained.

At the time when the imprudence of Valerian had given Syria over to the Persians there were in the East two men famous for their military talent, — Macrianus, the principal lieutenant of the captive Emperor, and Balista, who had formerly held the office of praetorian prefect. They collected the remnant of the army of Edessa, and sought at Samosata, in the narrow angle formed by Mount Amanus and the Euphrates, a place of refuge which it would be easy to defend.⁴ By slow degrees courage returned to the Romans. Balista reached the coasts of the Sea of Cyprus, collected a flotilla on which he embarked a few soldiers, and made successful descents here and there in Cilicia. As the Persians, in the pride of their victory, disdained all prudence, he frequently surprised their detachments, and killed many men.

But the best assistance came from a side whence the Empire expected nothing. We have frequently spoken in this History of Palmyra, its riches, its numerous population, and of a family of

¹ For details of this persecution, see Tillemont, iii. 415–440. The *Acts* of the martyrdom of Saint Dionysius, compiled in the seventh or eighth century, are not authentic.

² Orosius, vii. 22.

³ Euseb., *Hist. eccl.* vii. 13. Gallienus seems to have been a man of gentle temper. A dealer having sold imitated gems to the Empress Salonina, he condemned him to be eaten by a lion, and then let loose against him a capon. Everybody laughed, and the Emperor cried: “We have deceived the deceiver!” (*Hist. Aug. Gall.* 12.)

⁴ *Fragm. hist. Graec.* iv. 193 (Didot).

high rank there, the Odainath, or Odenathi.¹ The Palmyrenes, for their commerce, had need of the friendship of Sapor. They sent him ambassadors with rich presents to solicit his goodwill. The king threw the gifts into the river, tore up the letter that the envoys had given him, and demanded an absolute submission.² Palmyra had at this time as chief or prince of its senate an able and determined man, very rich and very influential, Septimius Odenathus. In critical periods men of distinguished ability naturally take their place. Odenathus persuaded his countrymen that there was no answer but war to insults which were a distinct threat against their independence, and he set on foot preparations for it in a suitable manner. The caravans had made Palmyra's fortune. To guide them, the city had been obliged to employ the Arabs of the Syrian desert, who all, from the Orontes to the Pasitigris, were in her interests. Odenathus reminded their sheiks of the destruction of Atra, the Arab city, by Sapor; he convinced them that their liberty and their wealth would be lost if the haughty king should drive the Romans out of Asia. The Arabs of the present day have two passions,—religion and traffic. Mahomet had not yet given his fellow-countrymen the former, but the latter passion had been extraordinarily fostered by the profits which the interchange of commodities between the two empires left in the hands of the carriers. They gathered in crowds around the "prince of Palmyra," and we shall see them establish an Arab empire for the first time.

Palmyra had a permanent Roman garrison, and this detachment served as a nucleus for the new army. The Roman fugitives scattered throughout Syria rallied about it, and Odenathus added his Arabs. The successes of Balista had endangered the situation of the Persians in Syria: their line of retreat was threatened on the south by the warlike preparations of Palmyra, and on the north

¹ Vol. V. p. 373, and Vol. VI. pp. 518 & seq. In April, 258, Odenathus had already received the consular ornaments (Waddington, *Inscr. de Syrie*, No. 2,602).

² Peter Patricius, *Excerpta de Legal.* 2.

³ Odenathus, husband of Zenobia (uncertain). Engraved stone in the *Cabinet de France* (15 millim. by 13), No. 1,399.



ODENATHUS.³

by the garrison of Edessa, which the troops from Samosata had probably joined at this time; and upon this too Roman soil they began to



SILVER VASE.³

be uneasy. Sapor led his troops back towards the Euphrates, leaving many of them behind him, surprised by a sudden attack of Odenathus. Arriving on the right bank of the river, the Persians congratulated one another, believing they were safe; but they were still obliged, says Zonaras, to buy their passage by giving up to the army of Edessa all that was left to them of Syrian gold.¹ In these deserts whirlwinds of men appeared. Drawn by the lure of carnage and booty, the nomads rushed thither from all quarters of the horizon, and powerful armies emerged from the waste. Odenathus, just now joined by Balista, found himself strong enough to undertake the conquest of Mesopotamia and to venture on following, as far as Ctesiphon itself, the track of Trajan and Septimius Severus.² In a battle he captured part of the treasures and some of the wives of Sapor. This

was the sharp reply of the Palmyrenes to the Great King.

Odenathus had not been able to set Valerian at liberty, but he sent captive satraps to Rome; and Gallienus, forgetting his father, celebrated with a triumph the victory which the legions had left the Bedouins to gain.

From this expedition Odenathus returned too great to remain

¹ Peter Patricius, *Excerpta de Legat.* 10.

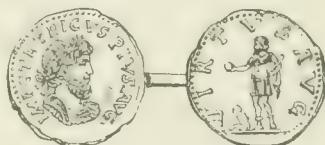
² Eutropius, ix. 10, 11; Malalas, xii. 227; Zonaras, xii. 23.

³ *Cabinet de France*, No. 2,880. This monument of Persian art under the Sassanidae is ornamented with two groups of lions, separated by the sacred tree *Hom*. The figures are in repoussé on a gold ground. This vase had a handle, which is now missing. Cf. Chabouillet, *op. cit.* p. 467, and Lenormant, in vol. iii. of the *Musée d'archéol.* of Fathers Martin and Cahier.

longer a private individual. The Arabs proclaimed him king: and Gallienus, to attach to himself so useful a servant, appointed him chief of the imperial forces in that part of the East,—*αὐτοκράτων*, or *imperator* (beginning of 262). Later, after further services, he gave Odenathus the title of Augustus; and the son of the clients of Severus took rank among the Emperors of Rome.¹

III.—THE PROVINCIAL EMPERORS (249–268); GALLIENUS.

THOSE who have been called, in imitation of Athens, the Thirty Tyrants, were neither thirty in number, nor were they tyrants. From the captivity of Valerian to the death of his son, we count eighteen generals who were proclaimed emperor² by their troops, as had been all since the Antonines; and they lacked only success to take their place legally among the masters of the Roman world. One only, Calpurnius Piso, was of the highest rank;⁴ another, Tetricus, of senatorial dignity; the rest were of obscure origin. Moreover, these so-called usurpers were neither worse nor better than the Emperors whose names are in the official list: many manifested ability and did service; all of them were as legitimate as was Septimius Severus. The Empire—that is to say, a union for common defence—seemed no longer to exist, since one of the Emperors was captive in Ctesiphon, and the other



COIN OF TETRICUS.³

¹ M. de Vogüé (*Inscr. sém.* pp. 29 et seq.) does not believe that Odenathus ever had the title of Augustus. But, as M. Waddington remarks (*Inscr. de Syrie*, p. 601), “at Palmyra it was not of particular importance to translate exactly the names of Roman dignities,” and as Zenobia is called in an inscription Σεβαστή, or *Augusta*, it would appear that this title was given her as widow of a Σεβαστός.

² We shall have twenty-nine Caesars or Augusti murdered in less than twelve years if we include sons of Emperors to whom their fathers gave the purple.

³ IMP. C. TETRICVS PIVS AVG. and the laurelled head of the Emperor. On the reverse: VIRTVS AVG.; Tetricus, in a military costume, standing; at his feet a captive. (Gold coin in the British Museum. Cf. De Witte, *Revue Numism.*, the elder Tetricus, pl. xl. No. 162.)

⁴ At least he was so considered: but it cannot be proved that he was of that illustrious family of Pisos whom Horace calls *Pompilius sanguis* (*Ars poet.* 292) because they claimed descent from Numa. Nor is it even certain that Piso assumed the purple.

wholly lost in pleasure, while the Barbarians were overrunning the provinces at their will. Under stress of necessity, patriotism reawakened; and since nothing could be expected from Rome, men looked to themselves for their preservation. The legions formed a permanent garrison of the provinces, and remained very long in the same places; for example, the Third Augustan occupied Numidia for three centuries. From this

COIN OF PACATIANUS.¹

resulted intimate relations between the army and the country. The soldier married there, the legion was recruited thence, and the troops borrowed the manners and beliefs of the country in which they lived. We have had occasion more than once to show that the differences between the armies of Gaul and of Syria corresponded to the differences between the two countries. By degrees these multiplied bonds had made the legionaries, as it were, the representatives of those whom it was their duty to protect, and during the eclipse of the universal Empire the provincial interest personified itself

YOUNG ROMAN.²

in provincial emperors. Almost simultaneously, Gaul, Illyria, Moesia, Pannonia, Greece, and Thessaly proclaimed their respective governors; and the provinces were so much in sympathy with the

¹ Coin of Pacatianus, emperor in Pannonia or in Rhaetia. IMP. TI. CL. MAR. PACATIANVS AVG. and the radiate head of the provincial Emperor. On the reverse: ROMAE AETERNAE. AN[no] MILI.[esimo] ET PRIMO (the year 1001 of Rome, 248 A.D.); in the centre Rome seated. (Silver coin.)

² Young Roman, supposed to be Saloninus. Marble of the Museum of the Louvre.



TRIUMPHAL ARCH OF GALLIENUS AT ROME.

soldiers that they shared their fortunes. In a province where Gallienus was able to overthrow one of his rivals, the civilians suffered as much as the soldiers: the legions were decimated, but the cities also were filled with carnage like the camps.¹

¹ Treb. Pollio, *Tyr. trig.* 8. This awakening of provincial patriotism is manifested by two things,—many cities (in Gaul, for example) abandoned in the third century their Roman name to

The most remarkable of these Emperors is Postumus.¹ He was a man of low condition,² but of great courage, and extremely popular in the Gallic provinces where he was born, and of which he had been the governor. When Gallienus quitted the country, in 258, he left his son Saloninus at Cologne, with the title of Caesar, under the care, not of Postumus, as would have seemed most natural, but under that of the tribune Silvanus; and Postumus was offended at this mark of distrust. On one occasion, when the latter had divided among the troops a rich booty recaptured from the Franks, Sylvanus claimed the spoils as belonging to the Caesar. When Postumus made known this order,



SALONINUS CAESAR.
(BRONZE MEDALLION.)

the soldiers, rather than give back what they had received, tore from their standards the effigies of Gallienus and Saloninus, and proclaimed their general (258). He led them to Cologne, obtained the surrender, after a long



GOLD COIN OF POSTUMUS.³

siege, of the Caesar and his adviser, and put them both to death.⁴ The nations and armies of the Gallic provinces, Britain, and Spain took oath to the new Augustus.⁵ This was not the establishment

take their own; and when the Emperors dismember a government to form new provinces, they usually give the latter the limits that these territories had in the time of their independence.

¹ M. Cassianius Latinius Postumus (*C. I. L.* vol. ii. No. 4,943).

² *Obscurissime natus* (*Eutrop.* ix. 9).

³ Coin of Postumus, bearing on the reverse Eternal Rome. Gold coin in an open setting and loop. Cf. *De Witte, op. cit.* pl. xvii. No. 265.

⁴ Eckhel (vii. 391, 438) places the surrender of Cologne in 259. The *Augustan History* (*Tyr. trig.* 3) represents Postumus as having a son whom Valerian had appointed tribune of the Vocontii, and whom his father had taken as colleague; but although we possess a great quantity of medals of Postumus, no one of them gives us ground to believe that this son, who seems to have been a person of only literary tastes, was made Caesar and afterwards Augustus, and the adoption of Victorinus confirms these doubts (Eckhel, vii. 447, and *De Witte, Revue de numism.* vol. iv., 1859).

⁵ Bréquigny, *Hist. de Post.* p. 356, in vol. xxx. of the *Mem. de l'Acad. des inscr.* This opinion rests, it is true, upon two doubtful readings of legends on coins which appear to belong to another period; but probability favors it (Eckhel, vii. 442).

of a Gallie, Spanish, or British empire: no one at this time thought of breaking with Rome; it was only breaking with Gallienus, and for protection uniting together under a famous soldier. Trèves was his capital. Here he gathered a senate, which decreed him all the titles attributed to Emperors on the banks of the Tiber; but upon his coins—the sole history of him which we have¹—he preserved the image of the Eternal City (*Roma Aeterna*).

Under the purple the new Emperor still kept his military tunic. He prevented the Alemanni from entering Gaul, drove back the Franks by constructing on the right bank of the Rhine strong forts commanding the fords, and his fleet freed the British waters from Saxon pirates. On one of his medals, *Neptuno reduci* indicates that he led this expedition in person;² another attests his efforts to free from pestilence the troops and the provinces.³ Successes of which we know nothing gave him those imperatorial salutations not seen on coins since the time of Caracalla, and the surname *Germanicus Maximus*.⁵ Coins of the year 262 give him these titles for the fifth time; some of them represent a Victory crowning the Gallic Emperor, and others a trophy raised between two prostrate captives. After making his power felt among the Franks, he sought to draw them into an alliance; an auxiliary corps which he recruited among them in furnishing him with soldiers, gave him also a pledge of the fidelity of these tribes.

The usurper therefore fulfilled all the duties of a legitimate ruler; security reigned in the provinces, and commerce reappeared on the roads and rivers.⁶ To show whence came this security, Postumus caused the Rhine to be represented tranquilly leaning upon his urn, with the symbols of peace, an anchor, a reed, and

¹ M. de Witte has collected them in a learned volume. The senate of Postumus, like the Roman Senate, struck bronze coins with the stamp SC.

² Mionnet, ii. 61, 68.

³ *Salus exercitus* (*ibid.* 64).

⁴ NEPTVNO REDVCI. Reverse of a coin of copper alloy of Postumus.

⁵ The figure V. following this title appears to Eckhel (vii. 439) to signify a fifth victory gained over the Germans. Another coin, confirming this one, has IMP. V.

⁶ This is probably the meaning of the two medals which have the unusual legends: *Mercurio felici* and *Minerva fautorix* (Eckhel, vii. 445).



COIN OF
POSTUMUS.⁴

following with his gaze the peaceful current of his stream. The legend was expressive, — *Salus provinciarum*.¹

 In 262 Postumus celebrated the fifth year of his reign. Since the time of Augustus it had been customary to make a solemn observance of the decennalia only; but at the period of which we write, an Emperor esteemed himself fortunate to have lived half that time, and five years was the *grande aevi spatum* rarely exceeded by any.
THE RHINE.²

Another distinguished general, Ingenuus, had been made Emperor by the troops of Pannonia (258);³ and the nations of that province had pronounced with ardor in favor of the man who had many times repulsed or driven into the Danube the Goths and Sarmatians. He was, however, defeated near Mursa by a skilful manœuvre of one of the imperial lieutenants, Aureolus, who with a furious cavalry charge broke the enemy's line. Ingenuus killed himself, or caused his attendant to kill him. Pannonia was deluged with blood;⁵ the province remembered it, and we shall soon see a new Emperor, Regalianus, made here.

For the moment Gallienus, conqueror of the rebels of Pannonia, and also of the Alemanni, whom he had just now driven out of Italy, seemed in a position to wage successful war with Postumus; but bad news come from Asia: Valerian was a captive, and Balista had induced Macrianus⁶ to assume the purple. This

¹ The bronzes of Postumus are very defective; but his gold pieces equal the finest of the preceding Emperors, and his silver coins still contain a little pure metal, while those of Gallienus have none whatever. To judge by the pieces found in collections of buried money of this date, it appears that Gallic coins were not received in Italy, nor the coins of Gallienus in Gaul (Mommsen, *Hist. de la Monn. rom.* iii. 124.).

² The Rhine seated, leaning upon an urn and laying one hand on a vessel. Reverse of a copper coin of Postumus, with the legend: SALVS PROVINCIARVM.

³ Cf. *Fragm. hist. Graec.* iv. 194 (Didot). It is possible that this revolt of Ingenuus was anterior to the Alemannic invasion of Italy.

⁴ IMP. C. FVL. MACRIANVS P. F. AVG. Radiate head of the Emperor. On the reverse: MARTI PROBPVGNATORI and the god Mars. Coin of copper alloy.

⁵ See the letter of Gallienus to Verianus Celer (Treb. Pollio, *Ingen.*).

⁶ Fulvius Macrianus. See in Treb. Pollio (*Tyr. trig.*, 12) the curious appeal of Balista to Macrianus.



COIN OF MACRIANUS.⁴

Macrianus, a soldier of fortune, had risen from the lowest ranks in the army to the first positions of the state. His marriage and the liberality of Valerian, who treated him with confidence, had made him rich enough to be able out of his private fortune to pay on the spot the *donativum* to the troops. He is represented by ecclesiastical writers as having employed magical arts to induce Valerian to undertake the great persecution of 258. The Emperor was impelled thereto by reasons really no more valid, but seeming to him of importance. Pagan authors, on their part, reproach Macrianus with having urged his master to that fatal conference whence the



GOLD COIN OF THE
YOUNGER
MACRIANUS.



Emperor never returned. These unauthorized accusations are not worthy of notice. Moreover, the man himself is not important, and his reign was very brief. He required, as a condition of accepting the Empire, that his two sons, the younger Macrianus and Quietus, should be made Augusti. Egypt acknowledged him (260 or 261).

Through the energy of Odenathus the East had been delivered from the Persians; but it was needful to restore tranquillity to men's minds, discipline to the army, and a sense of security to the population. The task was one which might occupy a ruler for many years. Macrianus never thought of attempting it; his design was to extend his power rather than to consolidate it. Leaving Quietus and Balista in Asia, he crossed over into Europe with his other son, Macrianus, and thirty thousand men to overthrow Gallienus. He sent before him one of his generals, Piso, who was to rid him of Valens, the proconsul of Achaia, a man whose talents the newly made Emperor dreaded. Valens, feeling himself menaced, assumed the purple in Greece; it is said that Piso did the same in Thessaly.¹ where he took refuge. These two aspirants had, however, but few troops, and probably but little money, and they were to be placed between the two immense

¹ The eulogium upon Piso pronounced by the prince of the Senate, and the *senatus-consultum* which decreed him a triumphal statue (Treb. Pollio, *Tyr. trig.* 20), prevent us from believing that Piso assumed the purple.

armies of Macrianus and Gallienus; disaffection broke out, and their soldiers killed them.¹

Aureolus had been rewarded for his services in defeating Ingenuus by the post of Master of the Cavalry and the government of the Illyrian provinces. He was the son of a Dacian shepherd,—a new proof that the highest ranks were recruited from a very low grade. Being sent to arrest the Syrian invasion, he was easily successful; a part of the army came over to him, and Macrianus perished, together with his son.² Thus the situation became simpler.



THE TEMPLE OF EPHESUS.⁴

At the news of this success Odenathus besieged Quietus, the second son of Macrianus, in Emesa, and put him to death, and shortly after this caused the assassination of Balista, the only man who could be an obstacle to himself.³ The Palmyrene remained sole master of the Roman East, and Gallienus and Postumus divided between them the West.

These domestic strifes were not likely to arrest the incursions of the Goths and Sarmatians in Thrace and Asia. On the coast of Asia Minor these Barbarians burned the famous temple of Ephesus, which, with its twenty-seven columns of precious marble, each sixty feet high, the sculptures of Scopas, and the gifts of kings and nations heaped up within its walls, was esteemed one of the wonders of the world.⁵ In Moesia the Goths took Nicopolis, which had arrested the previous invasion, and in Macedon they besieged Thessalonica, the key to that province. Their bands, increased by escaped slaves, many of whom were of barbaric origin, went as far as Greece, where they found small plunder and many mountains, which rendered resistance easy; and they appear to have suffered a defeat

¹ It is possible that Piso was killed by the emissaries or by the troops of Valens, who assumed the surname of Thessalicus. (*Ibid.*)

² In the ninth year of the reign of Gallienus; that is to say, before the 29th of August, 262, probably at the close of 261.

³ According to other accounts, Odenathus spared Balista, who lived in retirement on an estate which he possessed near Daphne.

⁴ ΕΦΕΣΩΝ. The statue of Diana within the temple. Reverse of large bronze of Hadrian.

⁵ The temple was 425 feet long, and 220 wide (Pliny, *Hist. nat.* xxxvi. 21). The Roman foot was 11.655 inches. [Cf. now the remarkable explorations and restoration of this temple in Mr. Wood's *Ephesus*. — ED.]

there.¹ Jordanes speaks of the childish delight of the Goths when on their return they found themselves at the foot of the Balkans, near the hot springs of Anchialos (262–263).²

Byzantium, the bulwark of the Empire in these regions, had a numerous garrison, which, probably on account of some delay in receiving pay, revolted, and pillaged the city. Gallienus hastened thither, and, as his custom was, showed himself very severe in the punishment which he inflicted. He remained there some months to intimidate the Barbarians, who had reappeared in Cappadocia, and to restore these provinces to order, rebuilding the fortifications of many of the cities. He also carried on negotiations with Odenathus, which resulted in his accepting the Arab chief as his colleague in the Empire (264). On his return to Rome he celebrated, with all the magnificence that the precarious state of the finances permitted, the tenth year of his unfortunate reign.

In the spring of 264 Gallienus at last prepared to avenge his son and recover the Gallic provinces.⁴ It is said⁵ that he proposed to Postumus to decide their

quarrel by single combat; to which the Gallie Emperor replied that he was not a gladiator. Aureolus commanded the troops of Gallienus; he either would not or could not take advantage of an important victory to overwhelm Postumus, and the war was protracted. Notwithstanding the defection of a general of Victorinus,⁷ the Italian Caesar — who with several legions went over to the side of the Gallie Caesar, and was by the latter associated with himself in the imperial power (265)⁸ — Postumus

¹ Treb. Pollio, *Gall.* 5.

² The *aquae calidæ* were fifteen miles to the north of this city, which stood on the shore of the Black Sea, and they had a great reputation, *inter reliqua totius mundi thermorum innumerabilium loca omnino præcipue ad sanitatem infirmorum efficacissimum* (Jordanes, 20).

³ LEG. XXX. VLP[ia] VI P [sextum pia] VI F [sextum fidelis]. Neptune standing (copper alloy).

⁴ Eckhel (vii. 238) asserts that there had been hostilities between Gallienus and Postumus since the year 260.

⁵ *Fragm. hist. Graec.* iv. 194.

⁶ Victorinus wearing the radiate crown.

⁷ At least the coins of Victorinus bear the names of legions that are known to have been in the army of Gallienus. (Cf. Eckhel, vii. 402, 451.)

⁸ This is the well-authorized opinion of M. de Witte, *Revue de num.*, new series, vol. vi. 1861.



REVERSE OF A COIN
OF GALLIENUS.³



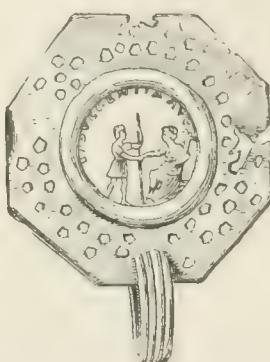
COIN OF COPPER ALLOY.⁶

was obliged to take refuge in a fortified town, where the imperial troops besieged him. Gallienus was wounded with an arrow

during the siege; and his wound, together with the unpromising aspect of the war, decided him to abandon the task he had undertaken. He returned into Italy, leaving Aureolus to guard the Alpine passes, — a precaution which proves that



VICTORINUS CROWNED WITH LAUREL.¹



REVERSE OF A GOLD MEDAL-LION OF VICTORINUS.²

the expedition into Gaul had not ended well.

Postumus, however, half victorious, half vanquished, lost in this war the prestige he had obtained by his successful encounters with the Barbarians. A competitor, Laelianus,³ appeared against him. He defeated this general; but having refused his troops the pillage of Mayence, the principal seat of the rebellion, a tumult broke out, in which he and his son were killed (267). The Germans took advantage of these disturbances to recommence their predatory expeditions, and burned several Gallic cities. Laelianus, respited by the death of Postumus, obtained some advantages over them, — attested by his coins,⁵ — and rebuilt the forts which they had destroyed on the right bank of the Rhine; but the soldiers, offended by the labors which he required of them, murdered him.

Victorinus had doubtless instigated this tragedy, which relieved him from a competitor; but another immediately came forward, — Marius, formerly a blacksmith. The *Augustan History* assigns to



LAELIANUS.⁴

¹ Gold medallion in an open setting. (Collection of the Hague; J. de Witte, *Recherches, etc.*, pl. xxvi. No 24.)

² INDVLGENTIA AVG[usta]. The Emperor, standing, assisting a kneeling figure to rise.

³ *Revue de num.*, vol. iv. 1859.

⁴ Laelianus crowned with laurel. (Gold Coin.)

⁵ Cohen, v. 60. One coin of Laelianus represents Spain, where he certainly never was in command, but he included it in his government (Eckhel, vii. 449).

this person only three days' reign, in order to say that on the first day he was made emperor, on the second he reigned, and on the

third he was dethroned. It is probable, however, that the time was somewhat longer; an old comrade, whose hand he had refused to touch, struck him with a sword which, as the story went, they had forged together.²

The former colleague of Postumus, Victorinus,³ had remained during these catastrophes the emperor of the Gallic provinces. He was born of a rich family, and one of his kindred, Tetricus, governed Aquitaine. These ties of relationship consolidated his power, making him a national ruler in the eyes of the Gauls; and he appeared so formidable to Gallienus that the latter, far from attacking him in Gaul, feared lest he should come to seek the empire of Italy as well. But habits of the grossest debauchery tarnished the merits of Victorinus, and he was assassinated at Cologne by one of his own officers whose wife he had outraged (268).⁵

The true ruler during this reign had been Victorina, the Emperor's mother, a woman of masculine courage, the Zenobia of

¹ IMP. C. MARIVS AVG., around the radiate head of the Gallic Emperor. On the reverse, SAEC [uli] FELICITAS, and Felicity standing (coin of copper alloy).

² We have coins and inscriptions of his which compel us to believe that his reign was not so short. De Boze (*Mém. de l'acad.* xxvi. 512) gives him a reign of four or five months,—from September or October, 267, to January or February, 268.

³ Marcus Piavonius Victorinus (Or-Henzen, No. 5,548; Eckhel, vii. 450).

⁴ Engraved stone of the *Cabinet de France* (20 millim. by 17), No. 2,105 of the Catalogue.

⁵ In the beginning of this year, and again in March, the Senate begs Claudius to overthrow Tetricus. Coins of Victorinus have lately been found in England.

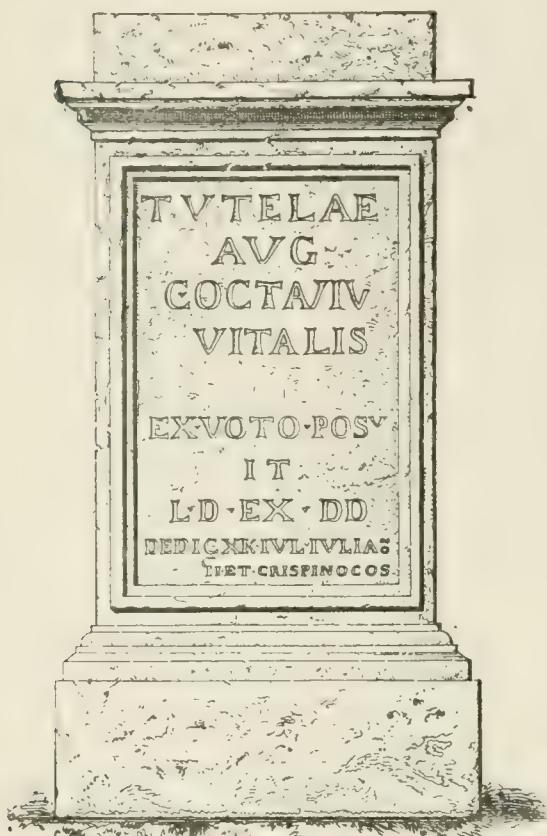


COIN OF MARIUS.¹



THE EMPEROR MARIUS.⁴

the West, who by her largesses exercised great influence over the army. The soldiers called her the “mother of the camps,” and a medal — the authenticity of which, however, is doubtful — gives her the imperial title. If she did not take this title, she at least disposed of it, causing the army to acknowledge as emperor Tetricus, her kinsman,¹ a prudent man averse to power, and only anxious to keep away from the camps, where rulers were made and unmade so quickly.



ALTAR OF TUTELA FOUND AT BORDEAUX.²

ant of the famous Decebalus, had the government of Pannonia and Moesia. He had shown himself an able general, and could boast of several victories over the Sarmatians. This was enough to determine both soldiers and provincials to make emperor a man who gave to the former booty, and to the latter security, especially while the memory of the cruelties of Gallienus in that province were still fresh in the minds of all. Regalianus was therefore invested with the purple.

¹ C. Pius Esuvius Tetricus (Borghesi, vol. vii. p. 430, note 4). He was proclaimed at Bordeaux before March, 268. De Witte, *Revue de numism.*, vol. vi. 1861, and *Recherches sur les empereurs qui ont régné dans les Gaules au troisième siècle*.

² This pedestal doubtless bore a statue of Tutela, — the personified protecting power of the gods, a divinity much honored at Bordeaux. The inscription is of the year 224. Cf. Ch. Robert, *Culte de Tutela*, in the *Mémoires de la Soc. arch. de Bordeaux*.

A Dacian, Regalianus, believed to be a descend-

ant of the goddess Tutela; and we leave him there philosophically awaiting Aurelian and the termination of an imperial power which he had not desired.

This was the establishment of a Pannonian empire, after the manner in which the empires of Gaul and of the East had been established, and for the same reasons; namely, the defence of the territory committed to the worthiest, because the official Emperor failed to make it secure. Regalianus came to a violent end,—according to some, in a revolt among his own people;¹ according to others, by an attack from Gallienus.

Seeing the Empire thus parcelled out, there was no man too insignificant to desire to have his share. Of Antoninus, Memor, and Cecrops, we know only the names; of Saturninus we have only this saying to his soldiers: “Comrades, you lose a good general, and you make a worthless emperor;” of Celsus, this anecdote, that his partisans not finding the purple mantle which was indispensable for the consecration of an emperor, threw over him the robe of the *dea caelestis* of Carthage. The great goddess was scandalized, no doubt, at this impiety, for Celsus was killed almost immediately. His body was thrown to the dogs, which devoured it, and his effigy nailed to the cross on which criminals suffered, that the infamy of this unfortunate man, who had reigned seven days, might be made eternal.

Aemilianus, on the banks of the Nile, enjoyed his ephemeral dignity a little while longer, until Gallienus, being in need of the Egyptian wheat, sent against him Theodotus, whose services and fidelity had already been proved in Gaul. Aemilianus was defeated and taken prisoner, and soon after was strangled in his dungeon. In the number of usurpers is also placed one Trebellianus, a chief of those Isaurian mountaineers whom Rome had never civilized or disciplined. A bandit by trade, a pirate, he took advantage of the universal disorganization to extend his predatory expeditions. A brother of Theodotus defeated and killed him. Such is the perpet-

COIN OF REGALIANUS.²AEMILIANUS LAURELLED.
(LARGE BRONZE.)

¹ Treb. Pollio, *Tyr. trig.* 10.

² IMP. C. P. C. REGALIANVS AVG.; radiate head of Regalianus. On the reverse: LIBER[al]ITAS AVGVSTINA; Liberty standing, holding a freedman's cap and a sceptre. (Silver coin.)

ually recurring termination of all these narratives. Local patriotism was keen enough for the desire to prevail of having a national chief; it was not persevering enough long to maintain these provincial Emperors, who, owing their elevation to disorder and public calamity, became in their turn its victims. Revolts continued because they had begun, and men killed because they had killed.



AEMILIANUS BEFORE HIS ACCESSION (PROBABLE).¹

One only of these usurpers so quickly overthrown interests us,—the king of Palmyra, founder of a half Arab state, who, if he had been able to establish his authority, would have changed the face of the East. For this it was needful that Odenathus should live; but, like all the others, he was assassinated. We shall again refer to this murder and to this kingdom in the history of Aurelian.

What was Gallienus doing in the midst of these catastrophes? One of the old authors loads him with maledictions;² another represents him laboring diligently to avert the public misfortunes.³ When news came of the defection of the Gauls and of Egypt, Pollio represents him as saying: “Can we not live, then, without Egyptian linen and tapestry?” At the same time, he was not

¹ Bust of the Museum of Lyons (Comarmond, *Descr. des Antiques*, etc., pl. 9, No. 152).

² Treb. Pollio, in the *Augustan History*. This author wrote in the time of the Caesar Constantius, a descendant of Claudius II. (*Gall.* 14), and Claudius caused the murder of Gallienus; Pollio therefore regarded Gallienus as a criminal.

³ Zosimus, i. 30-45.

destitute of courage; he loved poetry, eloquence, the arts, and he was on the point of giving Plotinus, at the request of the Empress Salonina, a district in Campania (to be called Platonopolis), that the philosopher might try the experiment of Plato's Republic. But of what value are these mental endowments,—the splendid and beautiful adornment of more prosperous reigns? At such a time as this the Empire needed, not a maker of Greek and Latin verses, but a soldier. Gallienus might have reigned like Aurelian, Probus, and Diocletian. If he did not do this, it was because of his incapacity, and we may leave him with his poor reputation.

In 267 Aureolus, once a Dacian shepherd,¹ but a brave soldier, the conqueror of Macrianus in Thrace, and the adversary of Postumus in Gaul, was left to guard with an army the passes of the Western Alps against Victorinus, while Gallienus went to drive out of Illyria the Barbarians who had unexpectedly appeared there. These invaders came from afar; from the Sea of Azof five hundred vessels had set out, in which no strength was wasted, for they carried a multitude of warriors,² who at sea were rowers, and on land were fighting-men. They crossed the Bosphorus, the Propontis, and the Hellespont, killing and pillaging. When Mithridates besieged Cyzicus, four centuries earlier, that city had three arsenals filled with weapons, grain, machines of war, and in its harbor were two hundred galleys. Notwithstanding the many formidable warnings given these populations during the last thirty years, the Goths found no preparations for defence. They pillaged the city, and Lemnos and Scyros shared the same fate. The Peloponnesus and Epirus were ravaged, and one of their bands surprised Athens, whence the population fled. A monk of the twelfth century relates that the Goths, having collected in a heap all the books found in the city, were about to give to the flames these products of a civilization which they despised, when one of their chiefs deterred them. "Let us leave to the Greeks," he said, "these books, which render them so effeminate and unwarlike." Montaigne³

¹ Zonaras, xii. 24.

² Gibbon says fifteen thousand, taking for authority a text of St-abo, which allows from twenty-five to thirty men as a crew for the vessels of the Euxine. But we have no proof that, three centuries later than Strabo, these vessels were no larger.

³ *Essais*, i. 24. It is a reminiscence of the words quoted by Cicero in the *De Senectute*, 13, in speaking of the doctrines of Epicurus.

repeats this story, and Rousseau quotes it after him. An Athenian proved to them, however, that a man could be both a scholar and a soldier. Cleodemos, says Zonaras, rallied the fugitives, armed a few vessels, and killed a great number of marauders; the rest fled.¹ Zonaras is wrong as to the author of this bold stroke: the last of the Athenian heroes was the historian Dexippus. The city having been taken by surprise, two thousand Athenians escaped to a wooded hill, and there resisted all attacks. Other Greeks gathered in this "camp of refuge;" successful sorties were made, and some imperial galleys, coming up, destroyed the vessels of the Barbarians. The latter were not dismayed by this disaster, but made their way overland to their companions who were pillaging the Peloponnesus and Boeotia; they entered Acarnania by way of Epirus, and formed the bold design of returning home through Illyricum. This was the invasion which Gallienus set out to repel. He destroyed some of their bands, bought over others, and made one of their chiefs consul. We are tempted to believe that he put the consular toga upon the shoulders of this Herulan with the same feelings that we experience in giving a plumed hat to some negro king on the African coast. But this son-in-law of the Marcomanni, so much under the influence of Pipa, his young barbaric wife,² chose to give the ceremony all possible official grandeur; and the fact is more important than it at first appears. We have seen already how the Barbarians, admitted into the auxiliary troops, and then made citizens, filled the legions. We now see them pass, without change, from Barbarism to the consulship. The invasion was going on in the lower ranks, it will be seen also in the upper;³ and in consequence of this slow but continuous infiltration it was really completed on the day when it appears to begin,—with the furious attack of 405. Thus for two centuries all things continued to grow worse in this Empire, still Roman on the surface, but in reality more and more permeated every day with Germanic elements.⁴

¹ Zonaras, xii. 26.

² . . . *Quam is perdite dixerit.* To please her he covered his black locks with gold powder, and would have his friends do the same. *Gallienus cum suis semper flavo crinem condit* (Treb. Pollio, *Salon. Gall.* 3).

³ See, p. 196, what lieutenants Valerian gave to Aurelian.

⁴ A medal of this year commemorates a naval victory over the Goths, who, returning from

While Gallienus was fighting in Illyria, Aureolus found the occasion propitious to stir up revolt in Italy and seize upon Rome. The Emperor defeated him at Pontirolo (Pons Aureoli), upon the Adda, and held him besieged in Milan. But in the imperial camp, Aurelian, Heraclius, and Claudius, the most important generals in the army, conspired against the violent and feeble ruler under whom the Empire had fallen so low. One day, when at the news of a sortie attempted by Aureolus, Gallienus had flung himself unarmed upon a horse, a conspirator pierced him with an arrow (March 22, 268). His brother Valerianus was also killed; this young man was of amiable character and brilliant talents, and dying at an age when many hopes centred in him, left a much-loved memory. Claudius had ordered his death for reasons of state; but he erected to him a monument, on which these words were engraved, wherein we seem to read a half-stifled regret: *Valerianus, imperator.*¹

We have had occasion to remark that the entire defence in this reign stops at the Danube and the Rhine: this signifies that the Decumatian lands and Dacia, where the early Empire kept Barbarism in check, were lost.² Nor were the Roman troops any longer able to guard the line of the two rivers, which armed bands incessantly crossed in the intervals of the great invasions, so that disquietude prevailed everywhere. It was a condition similar to that of France at the time of the Norman incursions. Consequently (as later was done in the beginning of feudal times, and for the same reasons) the provinces were covered with fortified castles, and the walls of cities were made strong again. Gallienus rebuilt those of Verona, the gate of Italy,³ and employed two

Asia laden with spoils, were scattered by a tempest upon the Euxine, and later by a Roman flotilla (Eckhel, vii. 394, and Treb. Pollio, *Gall.* 12).

¹ Treb. Pollio, *Valeriani duo*, 8. He was the son of Valerian's second wife. Eckhel (vii. 427–435) believes that he was neither Caesar nor Augustus, notwithstanding the positive assertion of Trebellius Pollio. The word *imperator* would be then merely the military title; but this title had for many years been given only to sovereigns. Zonaras says that a second son of Gallienus was put to death by order of the Senate.

² Aur. Victor, Eutropius, and Orosius (vii. 22) place the loss of Dacia in this reign. The series of coins of Odessus (near Varna), which begin with Trajan and end with Salonina, the wife of Gallienus, prove that this part of Moesia (where the Goths had destroyed Istria) was in process of being detached from the Empire.

³ Accordingly Verona took his name: *Colonia Augusta Verona Nova Gallieniana*; inscription over the gate of Verona, now called *de' Borsari* (*C. I. L.* v. 3,329).

Byzantine engineers to fortify the towns of Moesia;¹ Claudius II. later reconstructed the walls of Nicaea;² Aurelian and Probus undoubtedly continued these defensive works; and as the Barbarians penetrated far into the provinces, the cities of the interior, as well as those of the frontiers, surrounded themselves with ramparts.³ The Emperors of the first two centuries of the Christian era had not required so much precaution, for the reason that they had made the Empire one great city, peaceful and industrious, needing to be protected by outposts only, which good discipline rendered perfectly inaccessible. The two periods are characterized by their monuments: in one, the works of peace, strength, and security; in the other, the works of war, of weakness and alarm.

¹ Treb. Pollio, *Gall.* 13: . . . *Instaurandis urbibus munierendisque praefecit.* One of these engineers was named Athenaeus, and we have from an author of this name, in the *Mathematici veteres*, 1693, a treatise on machines of war.

² Letronne, *Journal des Savants*, 1827.

³ See above, p. 219.

THIRTEENTH PERIOD.

THE ILLYRIAN EMPERORS: THE EMPIRE STRENGTHENED.

CHAPTER XCVII.

CLAUDIUS AND AURELIAN (268-275 A.D.).

I.—CLAUDIUS II. (268-270); THE FIRST INVASION REPULSED.

THE conspirators of the camp of Milan were very different men from the praetorians who had formerly put the Empire up to auction. They were brave soldiers, determined to make an end to the disgrace of Rome by the re-establishment of discipline and a vigorous prosecution of the war against the Barbarians. They selected for emperor that one of their comrades who seemed to be the most experienced and who was the most conspicuous, Claudio the Dalmatian.¹ The flatterers of Constantius Chlorus, his grand-nephew, gave Claudio for ancestor the Trojan Dardanus; but he had made his own rank. Decius had declared him indispensable to the state; Valerian held him in high esteem, and Gallienus dreaded his judgment.

Under Valerian, Claudio had held the government of Illyricum and the command of the troops posted from the Alps to the Euxine, with the salary of a prefect of Egypt, the honors of the

¹ Marcus Aurelius Claudio. Trebellius Pollio (*In Claudio*, ?) gives him the *nomen gentilicium* of Flavius, which passed to all his posterity. Zosimus and Zonaras say that he was a member of the conspiracy,—and this is doubtless the fact, although Julian, his kinsman, denies it. He had two brothers, Quintillus, of whom we shall speak later, and Crispus, whose daughter Claudia, married to Eutropius, was the mother of Constantius Chlorus.

proconsul of Africa, and a suite as numerous as that of the Emperor,¹— in which we see that the luxury of Oriental courts had invaded the court of Rome, transforming, even in these times of disaster, the simple *comitatus* of the early proconsuls into a royal suite ruinous to the public finances. The weakness of Gallienus exasperated Claudius; something of this came to the Emperor's ears, who made haste to write to one of his officers a deprecatory letter,

wherein is revealed the miserable condition of these Augusti, who knew neither how to command nor how to make themselves obeyed:—

“I learn with the deepest regret by your report that Claudius, our kinsman and friend, is greatly offended with me on account of rumors— mostly untrue— which have been brought him. I beg you, my dear Venustus, if you will do me a service, to employ Gratus and Herennianus to appease him. But

let it all be done secretly, lest the Dacian soldiers, already discontented, should proceed to some dangerous extremity. I send him presents. Persuade him to receive them courteously; but let him not suspect that I know his sentiments towards me, for if he believed me to have cause of resentment against him, he might take violent action.”³

¹ *Salarii quantum habet Aegypti praefectura, tantum vestium quantum proconsulatu Africano detulimus, tantum argenti quantum accipit curator Illyrici* (Treb. Pollio, *Claud.* 15).

² Gold bracelet adorned with a coin of Claudius Gothicus. (Cabinet of Vienna.) Cf. Ar-
neth, *Gold und Silb.* pl. vi. 11. This bracelet (about twice the size of the figure) bears four
coins engraved, — Marcus Aurelius, Caracalla, Gordian III., and Claudius II., — and proves
like the necklace found at Naix (see frontispiece of Sect. I. of this volume) and many aurei
which we have already given, the taste of the Romans for jewels of this kind.

³ These gifts, which the Emperor enumerates in his letter, were as follows: “Two cups of
three pounds weight, adorned with precious stones; two gold cups of three pounds, enriched
with gems; a basin of chased silver of twenty pounds; a silver dish with chasing of vine-leaves
of thirty pounds; another great silver dish, with ivy-leaves, of twenty-three pounds; a silver
basin of twenty pounds weight, whereon is engraved a fish; two silver pitchers inlaid with gold
of six pounds weight, and some small silver vases, weighing collectively twenty-five pounds;
ten Egyptian cups of divers workmanship; two cloaks of brilliant color with purple borders;
sixteen garments of various kinds; a white tunic, half silk; a linen garment, with silk bands
embroidered with gold, of the weight of three ounces; three pairs of our boots of Persian
leather; ten Dalmatian belts; a Dardanian chlamys in the form of a mantle; an Illyrian cloak



GOLD BRACELET.²

Gallienus hoped to pay his ransom in this way; but probably Claudius only despised him the more for it. When the conspirators proclaimed the new Emperor, the soldiers showed some discontent, in order to make their price higher. Twenty pieces of gold distributed to each man removed all scruples. They declared Gallienus a tyrant; and the Senate, with more genuine eagerness, did the same. They despatched to the Gemoniae the servants of the man who had been displeased at any trace of patriotism in the senators;¹ and it is related that in the curia itself one of the officers of the treasury had his eyes put out,² — a shameful act of cruelty, a presage of the degenerate days of the Later Empire. Claudius put a stop to these executions, and the Conscrip^t Fathers, repenting, placed Gallienus among the *divi*, — which was equivalent to the maintenance of his acts.

When they heard of the election of Claudius, they confirmed it by those repeated acclamations which seem to us so contrary to senatorial gravity, but were at that time a surprise to no one: “Augustus Claudius, the gods grant you to our prayers” (repeated sixty times); “Claudius Augustus, it is you, or a ruler resembling you, whom we have ever desired” (forty times); “Claudius Augustus, the wishes of the state call you to the throne” (forty times); “Claudius Augustus, you are the model of brothers, fathers, friends, senators, and rulers” (eighty times); “Claudius Augustus, deliver us from Aureolus” (five times); “Claudius Augustus, deliver us from the Palmyrenes” (five times); “Claudius Augustus, deliver us from Zenobia and Victorina” (seven times); “Claudius Augustus, may Tetricus be nought” (seven times).³

Claudius in fact found himself in the presence of three adversaries. With better judgment than the Senate possessed, he neglected two of them, who were far away, at the extremities of the Empire; rapidly disposed of the third, whom a judgment of the soldiers condemned to death; and occupied himself with preparing for a great war against the Barbarians. “The matter of Tetricus.”

for bad weather; an over-garment with a hood; two furred hoods; four pieces of Phoenician stuffs; 150 gold Valerians and 300 *trientes salonienses*.⁴

¹ See p. 239.

² . . . *Patronoque fisci in curiam perducto effosso oculos pependisse satis constat* (*Aur. Victor, Caes. 33*).

³ Treb. Pollio, *Claud.* 4.

he said to the Senate, "concerns myself only; that of the Goths is of importance to the state."¹

For the last thirty years these Barbarians had been ravaging the Roman frontiers; as booty became scarce, they formed the idea of establishing themselves as a nation in the interior of the Empire, whose climate they knew to be milder than that of the Seythian plains, where extremes of cold and heat made life hard. Messengers were sent from the banks of the Dniester to those of the Morava (March); councils were held among the Tervingae, or Eastern Goths, among the Gepidae, the Heruli, the Peucinii; and a vast coalition was formed to second the invasion of the Eastern Goths by a series of attacks upon the middle Danube. The Scordisci, of Celtic origin, entered the league; the Alemanni and their neighbors, the Juthungi,² doubtless informed as to these projects, promised themselves to take advantage of them to raid the rich valley of the Po. They even were the first to be ready. Without waiting for their allies, they rushed through the defiles of the Alps, which they had often before traversed, and came down in the year 268 upon the shores of the Lago di Garda (Benacus). Claudius met them there with an army which he had already been able to subject thoroughly to his authority, and half of the Barbarians fell under the sword of the legionaries. It was a good omen for the more serious strife to come.

During the winter of 268 the hatchet rang incessantly through the Sarmatian forests; the felled trees were rolled to the river banks, and in the spring these streams were covered with two thousand vessels,³ whereon tried warriors were embarked. The horde itself, consisting of three hundred and twenty thousand fighting-men,⁴—not to mention the women and children and slaves,—

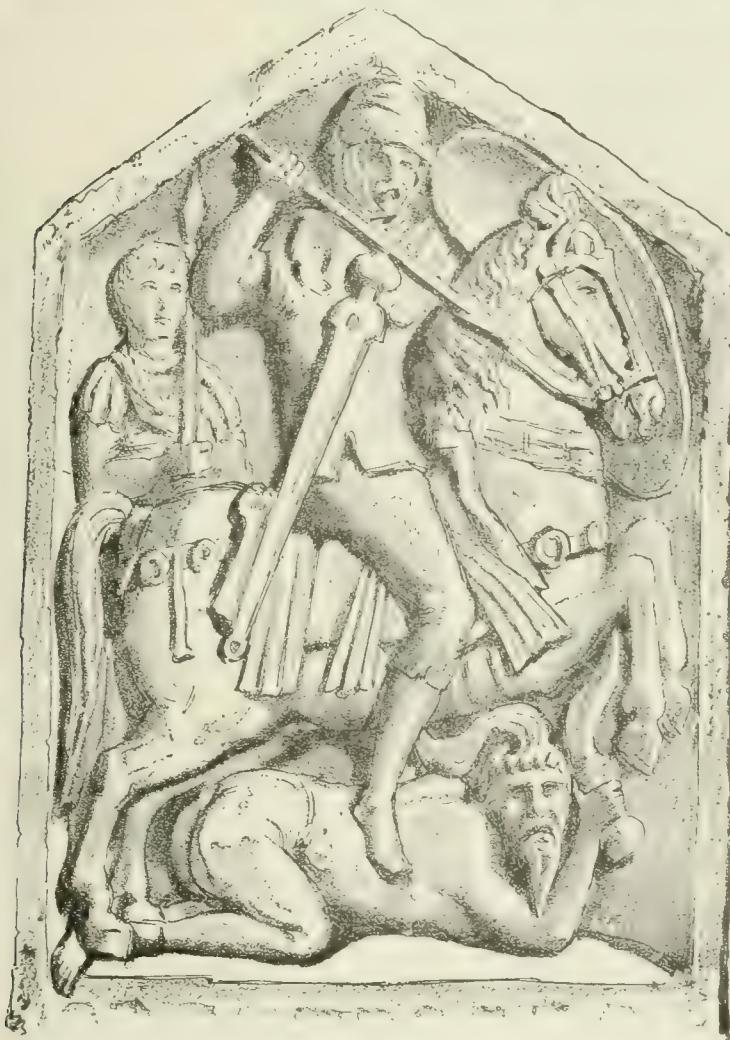
¹ He took, however, some precautions to close Italy against the Gallie Emperor, and to threaten the provinces of the latter. An inscription recently discovered at Grenoble gives Claudius the title of *Germanicus Maximus*, which he took after his victories over the Alemanni, and reveals a fact which no historian has mentioned; namely, his making ready for a campaign against Tetrius. This inscription is engraved at the base of a statue raised to Claudius by an army corps posted in Narbonensis, in which were some of the imperial guard (*protectores*), and whose commander was the *perfektissimus* Julius Placidianus, prefect of the watch (L. Renier, in the *Comptes rendus de l'Acad. des inscr. et belles-lettres*, July 18, 1879).

² Amm. Marellinus (xvii. 6) says of the Juthungi: *Alamannorum pars.*

³ Zosimus (i. 42) says six thousand.

⁴ This is the statement of Claudius in his letter to the Senate.

set out on its march westward, with innumerable flocks,¹ and great wagons which were made to serve as protection to their



ROMAN TROOPER TREADING A GERMAN UNDER HIS HORSE'S FEET.²

camps.³ The army and the fleet followed the coast, keeping

¹ The Barbarians habitually drove their flocks along with them, in order to secure their subsistence. We read in the *Augustan History* that under Valerian, — that is to say, before the great invasion, — Aurelian took from some bands in Thrace oxen and horses enough to supply the province, and that he was able also to send to one of the Emperor's villas 2,000 cows, 1,000 mares, 10,000 sheep, and 15,000 goats. This was the booty most frequently obtained from the Barbarians. Accordingly, Treb. Pollio (*Cloud.* 9) exclaims, after the Emperor's great victory: *Quid houm barbarorum nostri cibare majores, quid orium, quid equarum?*

² Monument found near Zahlbach (Museum of Mayence). The Barbarian is recognizable by his long hair and his curved sword (L. Stracke, *op. cit.* p. 59).

³ This use was so well known to the Romans that they invented a new word to express

at some distance from it,—the former to avoid the marshes which the sluggish rivers of this region create at their mouths, the latter on account of the shoals which the alluvial deposits form to a considerable distance.¹ The Danube was crossed by aid of the vessels, and a few days' march brought the Goths in sight of Tomi. Preceding invasions had made clear to all the cities in this region the necessity of reconstructing their walls and putting themselves in a state of defence. Tomi closed its gates; the inhabitants manned their walls, and the Goths were not in a condition to effect a breach. Being unable to delay

COIN OF TOMUS.²

in these plains of the Dobroudja, where it is so difficult to live, they set out towards the Balkans in the direction of Marcianopolis (eighteen miles eastward of Varna). This city, built by Trajan, was worthy of its founder, and stood firm against all attacks.

Upon this the Barbarians conceived a skilful design: they separated; the fleet sailed towards the Propontis, threatened Byzantium and Cyzicus, and then, notwithstanding a tempest which cost it a great loss of men and vessels, reached the peninsula of Athos, where they again separated. Part of them besieged Cassandreia (the ancient Potidaea) and the great city of Thessalonica, to open a way into Macedon. The others ravaged Greece, the Cyclades, Crete, Rhodes, Cyprus; and the storm, losing its strength as it went on, at last died away on the shores of Pamphylia.

While the rumor of these raids detained in the southern part of the Empire those Roman forces which were in the neighborhood of the Aegean Sea, the main attack of the Barbarians was made on the North. The Goths traversed Moesia, and arrived in the valley of the Margus (the Morava), being well aware that they

it . . . *facta corrugine* (Treb. Pollio, *Gall.* 13, and Amm. Marcellinus, xxxi. 7). The Goths before the battle of Adrianople, Attila after the battle of Châlons, shut themselves within a wall made of their wagons; and the emigrants upon the plains of the Territories of the United States do the same at this day.

¹ Whatever may have been the number of vessels, the fleet could not have carried the entire army, and the history of this invasion is incomprehensible unless we admit that there was both a land and a sea force.

² Bust of Tomus. On the reverse, TOMI TIMO, and an eagle within an oak-wreath. (Bronze coin.)

could not establish themselves peacefully on the right bank of the Danube until after they had destroyed the imperial army. Never, since the Gauls and Hannibal, had Rome been in so great danger. Claudius wrote to the Senate: “I must tell you the truth, Conscrip Fathers. Three hundred thousand Barbarians have invaded Roman territory. If I am successful, you will acknowledge that we have deserved well of our country. If I am not victorious, remember whom I follow. The state is exhausted, and we fight after Valerian, after Ingenuus, after Regalianus, after Laelianus, after Postumus, after Celsus, after many others, who have been detached from the state on account of the contempt inspired by Gallienus. We are deficient in bucklers and swords and javelins. Tetricus is master of the Gallic and Spanish provinces, which are the strength of the Empire; and — I am ashamed to say it — our archers are all serving under Zenobia. Whatever little we may do, our successes will be as great as you have a right to expect.”²

Claudius acted with discretion. He did not advance directly upon this enormous mass. Leaving his brother Quintillus at the head of a considerable army in the neighborhood of Aquileia, to keep secure this gate into Italy, he himself traversed Illyria, entered Macedon by the pass of Seupi, and halted in the upper valley of the Axios. He thus placed himself between the fleet of the Goths and their land army. Protected against the latter by Mount Orbelos, he could by the Axios, which falls into the extremity of the Thermaic Gulf, keep watch over the coast. If the siege-machines which the Barbarians had caused to be constructed by Roman fugitives should overcome the resistance of the inhabitants of Thessalonica, the Emperor would be able to hinder the victors from passing over into Macedon and effecting a junction with their comrades. This position permitted him, therefore, to wait his time for striking a decisive blow.

But the Goths were not able to storm a well-defended city, and they had not the patience to reduce it by famine.³ At the

¹ Quintillus, brother of Claudius II.

² Treb. Pollio, *Claud.* 7.

³ To preserve the memory of the brave resistance made by Thessalonica, a bronze medal was struck in honor of the god Cabirus (*Dio Cabirio*), the protecting divinity of the city, who doubtless came thither from Samothrae, the sanctuary of the Cabiri. (Cf. Eckhel, vii. 472.)



SMALL BRONZE.¹

news of the approach of Claudius they marched boldly to meet him; Aurelian, whom the Emperor had appointed chief of the cavalry, arrested them by an engagement, in which the Dalmatian horse distinguished themselves. Three thousand Goths were killed, many more were taken prisoners, and Claudius, now set free to move



GOTHS — MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN — LED INTO SLAVERY.¹

northward by the discomfiture of the southern enemy, went across the mountains in search of the great army in the valley of the Margus. The battle took place near Naissus (Nissa); it was long and sanguinary. A corps, which found the opportunity to advance through an unguarded road, turned the enemy's flank and fell upon their rear. This movement was fatal to the Barbarians: fifty thousand remained upon the field (269),² and the others, cut off from the valley of the Danube, fell in scattered bands upon Macedon and

¹ Bas-relief from a sarcophagus of the third century (Vatican).

² We have medals of Claudius of this year which represent him with the radiate crown. (Cf. Eckhel, vii. 471.)

Thrace. The legions separated to pursue them; the war was broken into fragments, and it became impossible to repeat the blow struck at Naïssus. From time to time the Barbarians halted behind the wall of their wagons,—a movable fortification, whence they made successful sorties against those of the Romans who ventured in too small force into their neighborhood. Nevertheless, wasted by



ROMAN AUXILIARY HORSEMAN (MUSEUM OF MAYENCE).

continual attacks, by hunger, and by disease, they perished in multitudes. A somewhat numerous troop succeeded in taking refuge in the Balkans. The Romans followed them thither, and barred all egress from the mountain, where during the severe winter provisions were lacking: and to complete their destruction, Claudius entered the defiles and put them to the sword (270).

The Emperor prepared his bulletin of victory with a rhetoric

not unpardonable: "We have destroyed a hundred and twenty thousand Goths, and sunk two thousand vessels. The water of the river is concealed under the bucklers that it bears along with it, the banks under broken swords and lances, the fields under the bones of the dead. The roads are all choked with the enormous baggage the enemy have left behind them."¹

The imperial fleet had also been successful in destroying what remained of the vessels that had come from the Dniester;² so that

of this vast multitude, very few returned to the regions they had left a year before so full of hope and courage. Those who had not perished were sent to cultivate as slaves or colonists the lands of the conquerors, and their wives were distributed among

COIN OF
CLAUDIUS II.³

the Roman soldiers. A certain number of their young men were enrolled in the cohorts, and others sent to Rome to fight in the amphitheatres. The capital doubtless was not the only city honored with "a present of gladiators." Claudius would naturally grant the same favor to many cities, that all Italy might see serving its pleasures those Goths who, during an entire generation, had inspired it with so much alarm.⁴

This immense drain upon the Gothic nation was to secure a century of repose to Moesia.⁵ But the Emperor who had repulsed this first and formidable invasion fell amid his triumph. A pestilence had aided him in setting free the provinces, but it carried him off at Sirmium (April, 270). He was but fifty-four, and his strong maturity promised the Empire a reparatory reign; for he loved justice, he desired discipline, and he was of those who knew how to maintain it. In the midst of the ambitious surnames which so many Emperors have received,—some for real, but more for problematic victories,—history should give the most honorable

¹ *Epistola ad Jun. Brocchum Illyricum tuentem* (Treb. Pollio, *Claud.* 8).

² Zonaras, xii. 26.

³ Reverse of a coin of Claudius II., bearing: IVVENTVS AVG. (Small bronze.) This coin, with the effigy of Hercules, makes allusion to the green old age of the Emperor, as Vergil says (*Aeneid*, vi. 304),—

Jam senior sed crudis die a viridisque senectus.

⁴ Treb. Pollio (*Claud.* 8-9): . . . *Impletæ barbaris servis Romanæ provinciae; factus colonus ex Gotho, nec ulla fuit regio quæ Gothum serrum non haberet.* He speaks also of immense droves of oxen and sheep and *quarum quas fama nobilitat Celticarum.* (Cf. Zosimus, i. 46.)

⁵ . . . *Pulsi per longa saecula siluerunt immobiles* (Amm. Marellinus, xxxi. 5).



mention to that of Claudius Gothicus. The nations long remembered him. As late as the time of Constantine, Eumenes says: “Why did he not longer remain the protector of men, and later become the companion of the gods?”¹

At news of the death of Claudius the legions of Aquileia proclaimed his brother, M. Aurelius Quintillus, whom the Senate hastened to recognize. The soldiers of Pannonia had made, however, a better choice in naming Aurelian,² whom, according to some accounts, Claudius himself had designated as his successor. Such was the fame of this general that his rival did not even attempt to contend against him. After a reign of three weeks according to some, of several months according to others,⁴ Quintillus killed himself, or was put to death by soldiers whom his severity had incensed.

QUINTILLUS.³

II.—AURELIAN (270–275).⁵

“AFTER the ceremonies of the festival of Cybele,” says Vopiscus. “the prefect of the city, Junius Tiberianus, took me in his chariot from the Palatine to the gardens of Varus, and we talked, among other things, of the history of the Emperors. When we came to the temple of the Sun dedicated by Aurelian, Tiberianus, who belonged to the family of this Emperor, asked me if any one had written his life. ‘Certain Greeks have done it,’ I said, ‘but no Latins.’ ‘What!’ exclaimed this upright man,⁶ ‘a Thersites, a Sinon, and all the monsters of antiquity are known to us, posterity will also know them, and Aurelian, this valiant Emperor who has restored the world to Rome, will be to our descendants a stranger! ’

¹ *Panegyr. Constantini*, 2.

² This is the statement of Zonaras; Zosimus does not give Aurelian the imperial dignity until after the death of Quintillus.

³ IMP. C. M. AVR. CL. QVINTILLVS AVG. around the radiate head of the Augustus. (Bronze coin.)

⁴ This is the statement of Zosimus. The number of coins of Quintillus that we possess (Eckhel, vii. 478; Cohen, v. 112–120) compel us to adopt the second opinion, which, moreover, agrees better with the early facts of Aurelian’s reign.

⁵ L. Domitius Aurelianus.

⁶ Vopiscus says (*Aur. 1*) *sanc tus*, using the word in its ancient sense.

Meanwhile we have his *Ephemerides*, in which he ordered to be registered his acts day by day.¹ I will cause these books, which are in the Ulpian library, to be given you, that you may represent Aurelian as he really was."



BUST OF CYBELE.³

These were rich materials which the highest magistrate of Rome offered to the historian. Vopiscus, a man of small mind and a poor writer, knew not how to avail himself of them. But the official documents which he drew from the archives are in many ways interesting; we have used some of them already, and shall use others hereafter.

Claudius had destroyed the great Gothic army, with the exception of some few bands which had found shelter here and there among the mountains, and later reappeared for a moment in the neighborhood of Anchialos and Nicopolis, where the country people proved strong enough to disperse them.² But, following the concerted plan,

there was to be a second invasion by way of Pannonia; the Vandals, the Juthungi, and the Alemanni were in motion. To arrest these new assailants, Claudius had turned northward and encamped

¹ *Ephemeridas . . . libris linteis (ibid.).* The scene related in this passage has been placed about 291, or sixteen years after the death of Aurelian. Junius Tiberianus in this year held his second consulship, but not the urban prefecture. Many passages in chaps. xlvi. and xliii. prove that Vopiscus wrote his book after the accession of Constantius Chlorus (305). The father of Vopiscus had been among the intimate friends of Diocletian, and we have seen that the son was the companion of the urban prefect. These relations with the highest society in Rome placed him in a position to take advantage of the reminiscences of Aurelian's early companions in arms; but his feeble literary merit proves that this society was not very exacting in respect to mental gifts.

² This fact explains certain medals of Quintillus.

³ Roman work of the first century, found near Abbeville. (Marble in the *Cabinet de France*, No. 2,918.)

his troops at Sirmium, a strong place not far from the point where the Save falls into the Danube, and the defensive centre of the entire region.

Aurelian was at this spot when the death of Claudius gave him the Empire. He was born, in 214,¹ in the neighborhood of this city, the son of a colonist of the senator Aurelius, whose name, according to usage, had been assumed by his freedman, and the latter had charge of a little farm belonging to his patron.² The mother of Aurelian had been a priestess of the Sun in the village where they lived, and he always preserved a special veneration for that divinity. We know his courage, his exploits, and the high offices which he had filled. Loaded with honors by Valerian, he had been, at the suggestion of that Emperor, received as adopted son or son-in-law into the family of Ulpius Crinitus, one of the great personages of the Empire, who claimed to be a descendant of Trajan: and thus the son of a Pannonian peasant became the heir to the household gods, the name, and the wealth of the most illustrious house in Rome.³

Very severe as to discipline, very exacting for the service, Aurelian exercised, however, a great influence over the troops, for the reason that they had often seen their general fighting like a common soldier, — a circumstance which, in the ancient wars, added prestige to a chief. There was talk of many enemies whom he had slain, and he was known in the camps as "the iron-handed Aurelian."⁴ Being the bravest, it was permitted him to be the most severe. A soldier had offered insult to the wife of the man

¹ Malalas (xii. 301) makes him sixty-one years of age at the time of his death, which fixes the date of his birth in 214; Tillemont and Wietersheim place it in 212. The *Alexandrian Chronicle* makes him seventy-five at his death; but the facts of his reign, medals, and other considerations, do not permit us to attribute to him this advanced age.

² *Colonus*, says the author of the *Epitome*, 35.

³ Vopiscus speaks, following documents which he gives as official, of a formal adoption: but as Aurelian did not take the name of Ulpius Crinitus, which he would have done, according to usage, had he been adopted, we feel obliged to doubt the authenticity of the act. On the other hand, both inscriptions (Orelli, Nos. 1,032 and 5,552) and coins (Eckhel, vii. 487) give him as a wife Ulpia Severina. If this Ulpia was the daughter of Crinitus, the marriage would have secured to Aurelian the same advantages as an adoption, while had he been the adopted son of Ulpius Crinitus he could not have married her who had thus become legally his sister. Many ancient rules had, however, fallen into desuetude, and it is possible that both the adoption and the marriage did take place.

⁴ This is rather a mediæval equivalent than an exact translation of the Latin *manu ad ferrum* (*Aur.* 6), "Aurelian, sword in hand."

with whom he was quartered: Aurelian ordered him to be bound between two trees bent together, which tore him asunder as they sprang back into their place. On one occasion he wrote to an officer: "If you desire to be a tribune, if you wish even to live, restrain the soldier. Let no man steal a fowl or a sheep or so much as a bunch of grapes, or demand oil, salt, or wood. Each must be content with his rations: what the state provides is enough; booty must be taken from the enemy, and must not cost tears to the provinces. See to it that weapons, clothing, and shoes are always in good condition, the pack-horses well groomed, the company's mule¹ cared for by each soldier in his turn, and all the forage used, so that none be sold. See that the soldiers be attended gratuitously by the surgeons, and prevent them from wasting their money in taverns or upon soothsayers; require them to conduct themselves decently in quarters, and let brawlers be beaten." Septimius Severus had been wont to speak thus, and this firmness had given him an illustrious reign; it had the same results in the case of Aurelian.

Like the great African, Aurelian was a man of strict morality, and disdainful of pleasure; like him, also, Aurelian did not hasten to receive the foolish acclamations of the Senate. He defeated the Juthungi, who threatened Rhaetia, and regulated the affairs of this frontier, which occupied several months. When he at last made the journey to Rome, he spoke haughtily in the curia. "I have gold for my friends," he said, "and I have steel for my foes."² It will soon be seen that these foes were not always on the frontiers. To have no cause to fear in Italy the old troops of Quintillus, he had brought home with him from Pannonia a large force. The Juthungi and Vandals deemed the occasion propitious to invade that province. Aurelian returned thither in all haste, sending before him the order to collect the grain and cattle within the fortresses. The shock was severe, and the victory indecisive. When night came, however, the enemy fell back, and Aurelian was able to cut off their route to the Danube. Menaced by famine in a desolated country, the Barbarians were ready to negotiate. Their envoys concealed fear under a show of arrogance, and the Emperor postponed

¹ *Mulum centuriatum*, the ordinance mule.

² Some uncertainty exists in regard to the order of events in the first months of Aurelian's reign. I have followed the account which seems to harmonize best with the known facts.

their audience until the following day. He then received them seated upon his tribunal, surrounded by a threatening military display. On each side, his principal officers on horseback; behind him, the

AURELIAN.¹

golden eagles of the legions, the effigies of the Emperors, the silver pikes which bore in gilt letters the names of the different corps; in the distance the army, as if ready to engage, ranged in a semicircle upon an eminence which brought it into full view.² Less

¹ Bust of the Vatican, Braccio Nuovo, No. 122.

² Α δὴ σύμπαντα ἀνατελλέσσα προφαίνετο . . . (Dexippus, *Fragm. hist. Graec.* iii. 682; Peter Patricius, *Excerpta de legionibus*, p. 126).

skilful in concealing their feelings than were the Indians of North America, the Juthungi stood for a while abashed in the presence of this imposing spectacle; but their audacity soon returned to them. "We do not ask peace as those who have been conquered," said their interpreter, "but as former friends of the Romans, and as men who know that a battle lost by a surprise may be followed by a victory. Our nation alone numbers forty thousand cavalry, and twice as many foot; and Italy, which we have almost completely overrun, knows well our valor. In alliance with us you will have no enemy to fear; give us, therefore, the usual presents, the subsidies that we were receiving before the war, and let peace be made." Dexippus, who relates the scene, is a contemporary, but he puts in the mouth of Aurelian an improbably long reply, of which we give only the concluding words: "Since you have violated the treaties and pillaged our territory, you have no right to ask any favors, and it is your place to accept the conqueror's law. You know what became of the three hundred thousand Goths who invaded the Empire: the same fate awaits you. It is my intention to cross the Danube and punish you in your own homes for your broken faith." The Juthungi, completely intimidated, promised to return into their country. A few months later came another invasion of the Vandals and the Jazyges, and another victory on the part of Aurelian, who, to facilitate their retreat, supplied them with provisions. They gave up as hostages the sons of their chiefs and two thousand horsemen, who were included among the auxiliaries of the legions.¹ Aurelian, making a sacrifice on his part which must have cost his pride a pang, although it cost the Empire nothing, ceded Dacia to them, offering lands on the south of the Danube to those Roman colonists who were unwilling to remain in the province. This relinquishment was necessary, for Dacia, overrun from both sides, and invaded to its very centre, was no longer tenable. If there yet remained Romans in the province, and there were enough certainly to form a brave and noble population, there was no Roman administration except in Transylvania, where a few cohorts probably defended the gold-mines of that country, which had been worked by the Romans for

¹ Five hundred who had spread themselves abroad in order to plunder, were murdered by the commandant of the auxiliaries, and the Vandal king had their chief shot by his bowmen (*Ibid.* p. 686).

a century and a half. To produce the impression that nothing had been lost, a new Dacia was constructed out of a part of Moesia, and the name of Trajan's conquest still remained on the official list of the provinces. But instead of the Dacia of the mountains, a



ROMAN HORSEMAN.¹

fortress which would have been impregnable if it had been possible to close its gate on the lower Danube, it was the Dacia of the shore, *Dacia Ripensis*,² which no longer protected anything. At last the god Terminus fell back. For a victor, the condition was hard; Aurelian seems to have felt the need of protecting himself

¹ From the Museum of Naples.

² Between Upper and Lower Moesia. It was at first called *Dacia Aureliani* (*Vopiscus, Aur.* 39); it was afterwards divided into *Dacia Ripensis*, with the capital *Batiaria* (*Arzari Palanka*), and *Dacia Mediterranea*, with the capital *Sardica* (*Triaditza*). Dexippus does not mention (at least in the fragments which remain to us) the abandonment of Dacia, and the narrative of Eutropius (ix. 15) gives us no means of fixing the date of this event, which comes naturally after the double treaty with the Juthungi and the Vandals.

by the consent of his troops, as representatives of the Roman people. At least he consulted the army on the question of peace with the Vandals,¹ and the withdrawal of the Dacian garrisons must have been the tacitly accepted consequence of the terms of a treaty which the army approved. In the state of the Empire and of the Barbaric world the Danube appeared to be the best frontier; and the great successes of Claudius, and those even of Aurelian, prove that, while the river did not forbid invaders a passage, it at least made their return difficult.

We shall not, as easily as the Emperor, say adieu to this valiant Roman population of Dacia Trajana. Worthy of its origin, and of him who gave it its first cities, it played in the Carpathians the part of Pelagius and his companions in the Asturias,—braving all invasions from the height of this impregnable fortress, regaining foot by foot, as the waves retreated towards the West and South, the lost ground, and reconstituting, after sixteen centuries of fighting, a new Italy, *Tzarea Roumanesca*, whose advent into the rank of free nations is saluted by all the peoples of the Latin race.²

Aurelian had been obliged to resign himself to this blot upon his name on account of a fresh invasion of Italy by the Alemanni and Juthungi. In the hope of exterminating this horde, or capturing it wholly, he undertook to imitate the plan of Claudius at Naïssus; namely, to have an attack made from the front upon the invaders by the larger part of the Roman army in the plain of the Po, while he himself, the praetorians and auxiliaries, should cut off their retreat. This division of the forces occasioned a disaster. The Barbarians, emerging in the evening from dense woods in which they had concealed themselves, surprised near Placentia the Romans, who were not keeping careful watch. Many of the legionaries perished, and a part of Cisalpine Gaul fell a prey to the most frightful devastation. From the Alps to the Straits of Messina there was a moment of terror, as lately there

¹ Dexippus (*Fragm. hist. Graec.* iii. 685): . . . ἐφορένον βασιλέως, ὃ τι σφίσι περὶ τῶν παρόντων λόφον εἴναι δοκεῖ.

² I cannot accept the opinion of Rosler (*Davier und Romänen*, Vienna, 1866), which makes the Wallachians return into Dacia in the beginning of the thirteenth century, any more than that which maintains that among these millions of men who speak a language of Latin derivation there are not numerous descendants of Trajan's colonists.

had been in the peninsula of the Balkans at the approach of the great Gothic army.

To calm these terrors, recourse was had to religious expiations. Aurelian, who knew what good use could be made, in leading the crowd, of the intervention of the gods and all the paraphernalia of old superstitions, wrote to the Senate the following letter, which the urban praetor read aloud in the curia: "I am surprised, revered Fathers, that you have so long delayed to open the Sibylline books; you conduct yourselves like men met in a church of Christians rather than in a temple of the gods. Act now at least, and by the sacredness of pontiffs and the solemnities of religion aid the ruler who is in a position of such difficulty. It is never a disgrace to have the assistance of the gods in conquering an enemy. It is thus that our ancestors undertook and terminated so many wars."

Before the arrival of this letter a similar proposition had been made in the Senate; but the sceptical and the Emperor's courtiers had turned it into ridicule; averring that Aurelian stood in no need of supernatural assistance. The imperial message, however, changed these sentiments; and the first senator who was called upon by the consul in charge reproached the Conscript Fathers with being so inconsiderate in regard to the safety of the state, and so slow in having recourse to the books of destiny and taking advantage of the favors of Apollo.² "Go, then," he said, "holy pontiffs, you who are pure, irreproachable, and sacred; go in sacred attire and with a pious mind; go up to the temple and prepare there seats wreathed with laurel; open with your respected hands the books of religion; seek therein the eternal destinies of the state; teach to children whose parents are living, the hymn which they are to sing. We will decide upon the expense necessary for this ceremony, we will order the preparations for the sacrifices, and fix the day for the lustration of the fields."³ (Session of January 10, 271.)

The city was solemnly purified, sacred hymns were sung, a



AURELIAN.¹

¹ Aurelian crowned with laurel. (Gold coin.)

² The Sibylline oracles were believed to be inspired by Apollo.

³ Vopiscus, *Aur.* 19.

procession went through the streets; lastly, sacrifices were offered, in places indicated by the sacred books, to prevent the Barbarians from passing over them.¹ Vopiscus does not say that these expiations were human sacrifices; but Aurelian offered captives of every nation:² and this could have been no other than the ancient custom of burying alive men whose offended shades would arrest

the march of their compatriots.

At the same time that Aurelian took measures to propitiate the gods, he also prepared his campaign against the Barbarians. The latter, who entered upon war rather for the sake of plunder than of gaining territory, had divided, in order to extend their depredations. They seem to have advanced as far as the Metaurus, which would indicate an intention of marching upon Rome,—the supreme ambition of all



HERCULES KILLING DIOMEDES.³

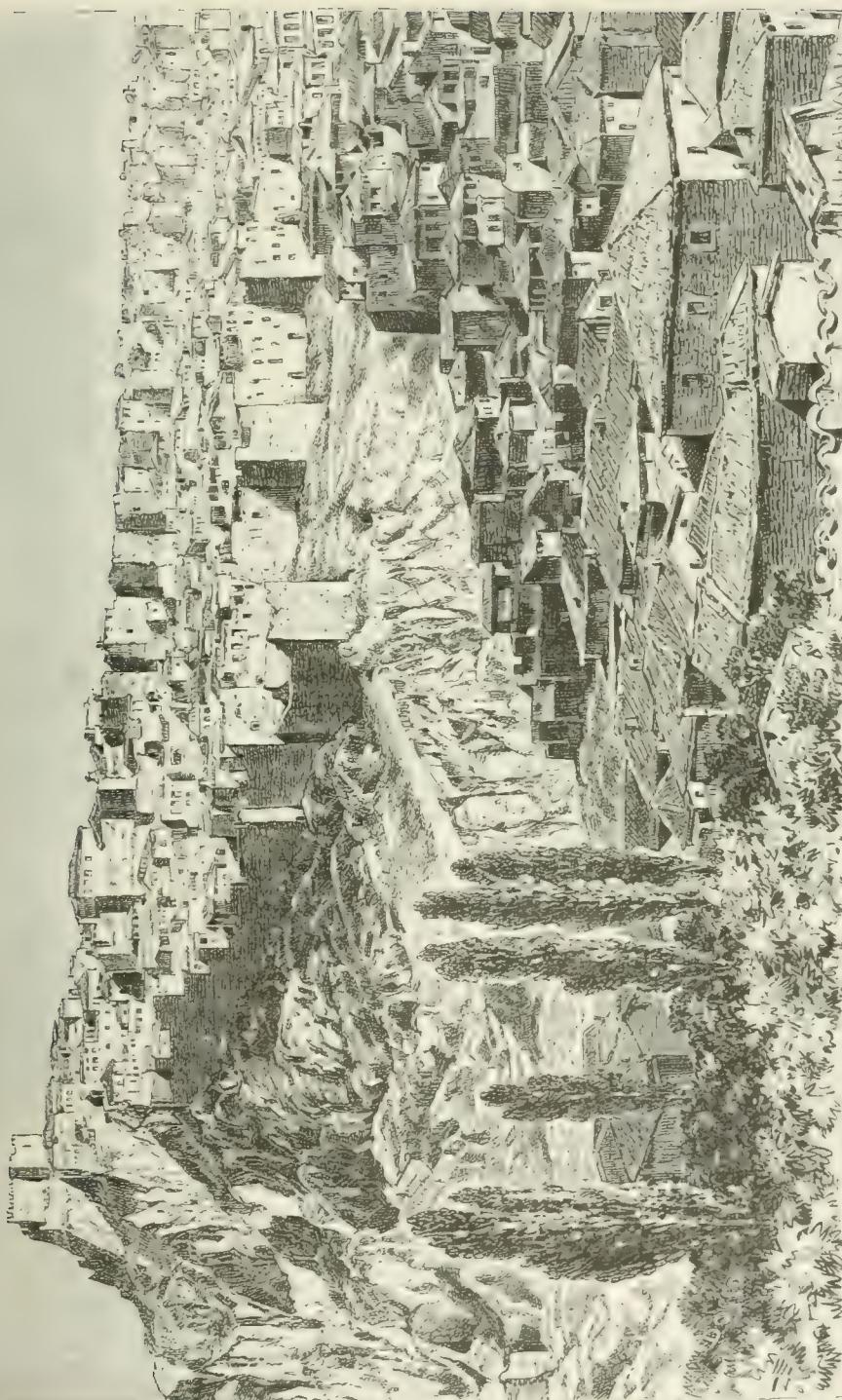
these marauders. At least, there exists an inscription⁴ in which the cities of Pesaro and Fano return thanks to "Hercules Augustus, colleague of the invincible Aurelian."—doubtless for some exploit of war achieved in their neighborhood. Aurelian pursued these bands, destroying them one after another; near Pavia he encountered the main body of the Barbarian army, and inflicted upon it a great defeat. And, once more, of these invaders but few

¹ *In certis locis sacrificia fierent quae barbari transire non possent* (Vopiscus, *Aur.* 18).

² . . . *Cujuslibet gentis captos* (*ibid.* 20).

³ Engraved stone of the *Cabinet de France* (cornelian of 19 millim. by 15), No. 1,771 of the Catalogue.

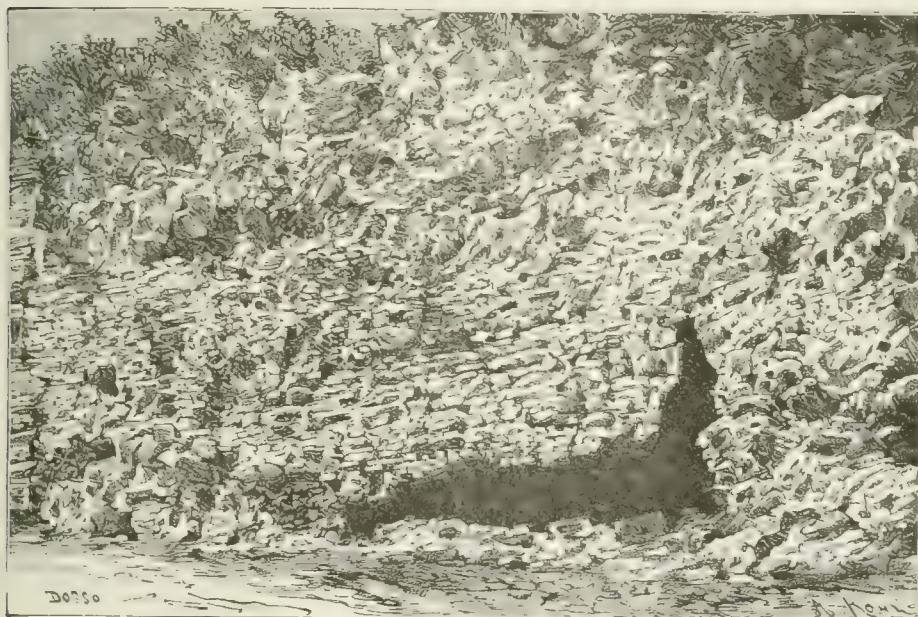
⁴ Orelli, Nos. 1,031 and 1,535.



ANKARA (ANGORA), FROM PIERROT'S EXPLOR. ARCHÉOL. DE LA GALATIE, ETC.

ever again beheld the paternal hut concealed in the vast forests of the Neckar and the Mein.

What went on at Rome during this campaign? No doubt there was much ridicule of the Pannonian who suffered the sovereign people to experience so great anxiety. It is possible that his statues may have been overthrown, and some of his people or his soldiers slain. Certain it is there were great riots, for Vopiscus



REMAINS OF AURELIAN'S WALL.¹

speaks of violent seditions.² The valiant soldier who had passed his life fighting for the Empire, regarded this tumult as treasonable, and severely punished those who were guilty, and even senators were put to death.³

Long ago, Rome, in the security which her fortune and her sway gave her, had gone beyond her boundaries, and the wall of Servius was disappearing under the houses and gardens which covered the vast embankment and the base of the *agger*.⁴ The

¹ From a photograph by Parker.

² *Romam petit vindictae cupidus, quam seditionum asperitas suggirebat* (Vopiscus, *Aur.* 18 and 21; cf. Amm. Marcellinus, xxx. 8).

³ Zosimus speaks of conspiracies, and of conspirators justly punished, among whom he mentions three senators.

⁴ Accordingly, Zosimus says (i. 19) of the Rome of that day that it was *ἀτείχιστες*.

enemy approaching, Aurelian resolved to return to the precautions of earlier days. It was a humiliating but necessary avowal. He gave Rome a second wall, outside of the first, which was completed by Probus; this was about eleven miles in circumference (271).¹ This new line of fortifications is further marked by the wall of Honorius, so called because of the repairs made by that Emperor.

The Barbarians being repulsed, and Rome placed in safety from a sudden attack, Aurelian turned his attention to the two competitors who kept the eastern and western parts of the Empire outside of his control, Zenobia and Tetricus. The latter was the nearer; but he appeared the less dangerous of the two, and Aurelian had private reasons for feeling no dread of him.² The Emperor therefore made his first attack upon the queen of Palmyra.

Odenathus, victorious over Sapor, whose capital he had twice insulted by planting his arrows in the gates of Ctesiphon, had been invested by Gallienus with the command of all the Roman forces in the East, and had even been associated in the Empire. He was making ready to deliver Asia Minor from the Goths, when, in 266–267, he fell a victim to one of those tragedies so frequent in the royal houses of the East.³ One day, in a royal hunt, his nephew Maeonios shot the first arrow and killed the game. It was contrary to etiquette, which reserved this to the king; and Odenathus angrily reproved the young man. Maeonios paid no attention to the reproof. Ambition to be considered the most skilful hunter in the desert deprived him of all prudence; twice again his arrows anticipated those of the king. The insult was public. Odenathus took from him his horse,—which was equivalent to depriving him of his rank: and when the violent youth broke forth in threats, he caused him to be thrown into prison. Being set free at the entreaty of Herodes, the king's eldest son, the Arab cherished in his heart a bitter animosity, and, with the aid

¹ I follow Piale's correction (*Delle Mura Aureliane*), which, in the text of Vopiscus (*Aur.* 39), *quinquaginta prop. milia*, understands *pedum*, and not *passuum*: 50,000 Roman feet making about eleven miles.

² Eckhel (vii. 456) thinks even that the negotiation of which we shall shortly speak had been begun under Claudius. Coins exist in which are represented Claudius and Tetricus, one on either side (De Boze, *Mém. de l'Acad. des inser.* xxvi. 515).

³ The date of the death of Odenathus is determined by the Alexandrian coins; it occurred between the 29th of August, 266, and the 28th of August, 267.

of some accomplices, assassinated, during a banquet, both Odenathus and Herodes.¹

Zenobia had shared in the power and in the labors of her husband.² She claimed descent from the Macedonian kings of Egypt, which made her the woman of highest rank in the East; she was called also the most beautiful, and she was the most virtuous.³ Ambition had stifled in her heart the vices which the harem nourishes. She knew all the languages spoken from Palmyra to Athens, and from Athens to Memphis, even Latin;⁴ she read Homer and Plato; with Longinus — whose claims as author of the treatise on the Sublime are questionable, but who knew how to die bravely — she discussed questions of philosophy and literature; with the famous Archbishop of Antioch, Paul of Samosata, questions of theology; and she gave her two elder sons such able instructors that it was said of one of them, Timolaos, that had he lived longer he might have taken rank with the great Latin orators. The desert had, like Athens and Rome, its academy of learned men; but Palmyra had not all the tastes of the Western world, for we find there no trace of those amphitheatres which all truly Roman cities made haste to build.

Zenobia accompanied her husband in war and the chase; she aided him in conquering the Persians, and essayed without him to conquer Egypt. Some accuse her of having been in the conspiracy which cost the Palmyrene Caesar his life; but we have reason to doubt this. She had a son by a former marriage, to whom Herodes barred the way to power, and whom the latter's death would make heir to the kingdom. Doubtless the mother thought of this, it may be she hoped for it; but to share in a plot against

ZENOBLA.⁵

¹ Zonaras, xii. 24.

² M. de Vogüé (*Inscr. sém.* p. 29) translates the Semitic name of Zenobia, Batzebinah, by *mercatoris filia*. But it may also be said that Zenobia is a Greek name, which the queen assumed on account of her kinship with the Zenobii, who were very numerous at Palmyra, and also to gratify her Greek subjects.

³ Treb. Pollio, *Tyr. trig.* 20

⁴ *Ibid.* 30. This author adds that Zenobia had read a history of Rome written in Greek, — doubtless that of Dion Cassius, and that she had composed an abstract of the history of Alexander and of the East.

⁵ Zenobia, queen of Palmyra, wearing the diadem. (Small bronze.)

Odenathus would have been to conspire against herself. Maeonios had assassinated his uncle through revenge, and with the design of taking his place, not of leaving it to Zenobia; neither had it been necessary to urge him to rid himself of Herodes, whom Odenathus had associated with himself in the supreme power,¹ the first crime making the second necessary. But we admit that the young prince's stepmother must have seen without regret this death, which freed her son from a rival. The tragedy being accomplished, she aroused against the murderer the very soldiers who had proclaimed him king, and who now, doubtless for a little

BRONZE.³

money, laid his head at Zenobia's feet; after which they saluted her eldest son, Waballath, with the title of Augustus, and the two others as Caesar.² She presented these boys, clad in the Roman purple, to the people and to the army, while she kept for herself the real power, with the title *basilissa*, queen,—equivalent, doubtless, in the minds of the Palmyrenes, to that of Augusta.

In the midst of the confusion which had prevailed for nearly forty years, no one was surprised at all these Caesars emerging from an Arab city. But it must have seemed strange to behold these children of the desert, who had been accustomed to hold the sex in subjection, thus quietly accepting a woman's sway. The East, it is true, had so many goddesses reigning in heaven that it might easily, without too great a sacrifice, allow women to reign upon earth,⁴ and its legends always spoke of Semiramis, the mighty sovereign of Babylon, of Dido, the famous Carthaginian, and of that Queen of Sheba who had wished to behold in all his glory the king of the Jews, the founder of Tadmor. Zenobia took pleasure in remembering Cleopatra, whom she equalled in beauty and in power, but whose masculine resolution at the last hour she perhaps

¹ Treb. Pollio, *Tyr. trig.* 14, 15.

² The Latin legend of the coins of Waballath is V. C. R. I. D. R., which M. de Sallet reads, *vir consularis, rex imperator, dux Romanorum*. At Palmyra he did, in fact, bear the title of king, and in Lower Egypt was called *βασιλεὺς*, king. In the fifth year of his reign (August 29, 270, to August 28, 271) he took the title of Augustus.

³ Bronze of Waballath Augustus, son of Zenobia.

⁴ The Great Goddess of Byblus was considered superior in power to the male gods,—her father and brothers, for example (Halévy, *Inscr. de Byblus*, a paper read before the Academy of Inscriptions, May 3, 1878).

did not possess.¹ Her court was modelled after that of the Emperors, with Oriental forms of homage borrowed from Persia, which Diocletian later imitated, and the diadem which he assumed. With bared arm and helmeted head, she harangued her troops in a loud and musical voice, going along with them usually on horseback, but sometimes even on foot, and shared in the prolonged banquetings of her generals, though never forgetting her rank and dignity. Aurelian does her justice. "Those who say," he writes, "that I have conquered only a woman, have no idea what this woman was,—how wise in counsel, resolute in carrying out her plans, firm with her soldiers, and, according to the situation, gentle or severe. Through her aid Odenathus subdued the Persians, and through fear of her arms the Arabs, the Saracens, and the Armenians have been kept in tranquillity."²

Zenobia was a formidable adversary. She entertained the design of adding to her territory in the East two countries as

¹ Treb. Pollio, *Tyr. trig.* 30. We say "perhaps," for Cleopatra had the opportunity for suicide, which Zenobia, who was very carefully guarded, probably did not have: see later.

² Bust of the Vatican (Museo Chiaramonti, No. 263).

³ Treb. Pollio, *Tyr. trig.* 30.



ZENOBIA.³

its outposts and bulwarks,—Egypt, whither she sent an army which seized Alexandria, and Asia Minor, whose peoples, “unable to say no,” accepted her sway. The Bithynians alone refused, and this refusal caused the failure of the whole plan; for Bithynia, lying between the Propontis and the Bosphorus, was the great highway for armies passing from Europe into Asia; and this highway remained open to Aurelian.

The Egyptian campaign began brilliantly. The historian Zosimus speaks of an army of seventy thousand men which seized upon

the country, or at least upon the northern provinces. A general of the name of Probus¹ had been sent against the pirates, who, taking advantage of the wide-spread disorder produced by the great Gothic invasion, were now infesting the coasts of Asia

WABALLATH AND AURELIAN.²

Minor and Syria. He landed, with what troops he had, in the Delta, where the Palmyrenes had left only a garrison of five thousand men, increased his small army by some volunteers, and would have defeated Zenobia's troops, when he was surprised near Memphis. Falling into the enemy's hands, he took his own life,³ and the queen remained mistress of Lower Egypt.

Alexandrian coins bear the heads of Aurelian and Zenobia's son, as if they had been colleagues; and the latest of them, belonging to the seventh year of the reign of Waballath, show that this situation lasted till into the year 272.⁴

¹ Or Probatus (Treb. Pollio, *Claud.* 11).

² VABALATHVS V. C. R. IM. D. R. and the laurelled head of Zenobia's son. On the reverse: IMP. C. AVRELIANVS AVG. and the radiate head of Aurelian. (Bronze coin.)

³ . . . *Pugnarit . . . temere ut paene caperetur* (Vopiscus, *Prob.* 9). Zonaras says even that he was taken . . . Ζηνοβίαν . . . Πρόβον ἐλούσαν (xii. 27). According to M. de Sallet (*Die Fürsten von Palmyra*, p. 44), Probus was a usurper who attempted to seize Egypt while Claudius was fighting against the Goths. Zenobia defeated him; after which the Egyptians acknowledged the authority of the *imperator Romanus*, — that is to say, Waballath, who swore fidelity to the Roman Augustus, Claudius. In respect to this individual we have followed the story of Zosimus, who seems to have been well informed as to the affairs of the Palmyrenes. (See Waddington, *Inscr. de Syrie*, 595.)

⁴ Eckhel, vii. 496. So long as Zenobia ruled Egypt as the deputy of Claudius, the name of this Emperor appears alone on the Alexandrian coins; upon the death of Claudius she caused to be struck, in Alexandria, coins bearing the effigies of Aurelian and Waballath, and also others with the head of Aurelian alone. After the rupture, in 271–272, the head of Aurelian disappears from the Alexandrian coins, and the name of Waballath is followed by the title Σεβαστός, Augustus (De Vogué, *op. cit.* p. 32).

In the spring of this year Aurelian left Italy with a numerous army for the purpose of regulating the affairs of Asia. On the way he drove out from Illyria, Thrace, and Moesia the Gothic bands who still lingered there or had returned thither; he pursued some of them across the Danube, and compelled them to give him as hostages a number of young girls of noble family, whom he placed at Perinthus. He wrote to the legate of Thrace to furnish for the support of these hostages a certain sum, but to keep them in communities of seven, so that the expense to the state should be less, while the young girls might still be suitably maintained. We have already seen that hostages such as these were very useful to the imperial policy. One of them, we are told, married a Roman general (and doubtless others did the same), and the Emperor furnished the dowry.

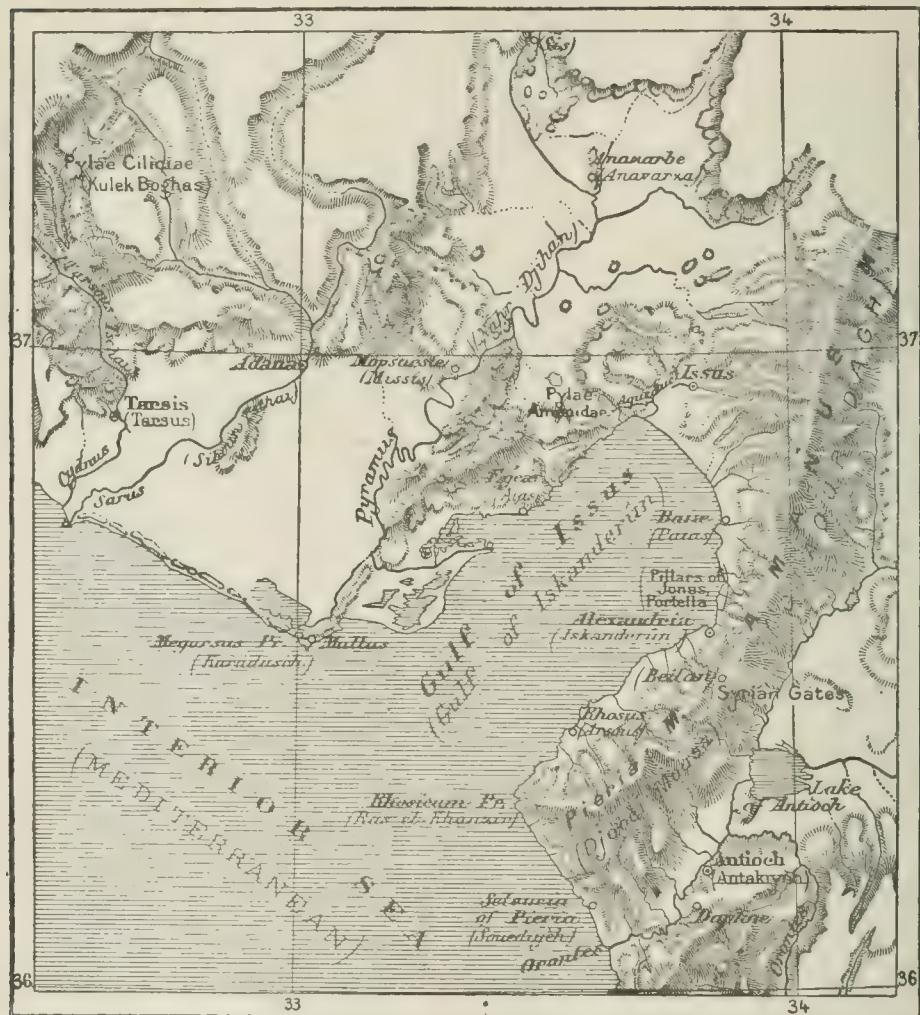
In Bithynia Aurelian was welcomed as a liberator; hostilities began in Galatia, where it was necessary to take Ancyra by storm. Tyana, an important city of Cappadocia, which covered the Cilician Gates of Mount Taurus, would have made a long resistance if one of its richest citizens had not indicated an ill-fortified and ill-guarded point. Aurelian put the traitor to death, without, however, confiscating his property,—a virtue rare among the monarchs of that time. The soldiers expected to plunder this wealthy city, but Aurelian forbade them to do it. Apollonius of Tyana still had his admirers; the biographer of Aurelian is one of them, and he declares that an apparition of the hero prevented the Emperor from destroying this city. Policy counselled moderation, and Aurelian understood that in those troublous times indulgence was due to those who did not know on which side the right lay, and where obedience was due.¹ When he gave out that Apollonius had prohibited the sack of his native city, the soldiery, who might have refused obedience to their Emperor, dared not refuse it to "the divine man," and a well-told lie saved a great city.

The passes of the Taurus were not at all guarded.² and the legions came down into Cilicia, turned the Gulf of Issus, and

¹ See later the amnesty that he granted.

² The Taurus, or Bulghar-Dagh, has peaks which rise to a height of 11,500 feet; but the pass is only 3,170 feet. Thence, by way of Adama and Mopsuestia, Aurelian could reach the road which crossed a spur of the Amanus (*Pylæ Amanides*), then turn at Alexandretta to the point where the Amanus, which runs parallel to the coast at a height of about

arriving at the Syrian Gates, saw beneath them the Lake of Antioch,—the city itself luxuriously reposing on the bank of the



THE PASSES OF MOUNT AMANUS.

Orontes, and Daphne, the sanctuary of licentious rites. Zenobia was there with a portion of her cavalry. An action, which does not seem to have cost many lives,¹ gave the city into the power

6,560 feet, leaves between it and the sea only those two famous defiles called the Cilician and the Syrian Gates, at 2,625 and 2,950 feet above the sea. (See in the *Bulletin de la Soc. de Géogr.*, January, 1878, the map of Messrs. Favre and Mandrot.)

¹ . . . *Præri apud Daphnem certamine* (*Vopiscus, Aur.* 25). Zosimus (i. 51) represents it as more severe; but it was only a cavalry engagement and a skirmish of outposts.

of the Romans; they entered it, while the Palmyrenes fell back towards Chalcis. Aurelian continued his plan of clemency. Many inhabitants of Antioch, fearing that they should be treated as partisans of the queen, had escaped from the city with the Arab army; but a proclamation guaranteed them life and property, and almost all returned.

In another affair, which has been made very conspicuous, he showed the same spirit of conciliation. Paul of Samosata enjoyed at Antioch both the office of bishop and that of *procurator ducenarius*, or steward of Zenobia's finances. The city contained many Jews and Christians; among the latter were men who, while accepting the Gospel, rejected the divinity of Christ, or at least understood it otherwise than the Church did. According to them, Jesus was but a man in whom the Spirit of God, the *Logos*, resided, as formerly in Moses and the Prophets.¹ They recognized the union of the Divine Word and the human nature in the person of Christ, and admitted that he might well be called God. But this attempt at a rational explanation destroyed the doctrine of God made man, and diminished the religious fruitfulness of Christianity. Paul thought as they did. In 264 his faith had already become an object of suspicion: however, a numerous synod of bishops, priests, and deacons, assembled to examine into his views, had found them not heretical. Five years later his adversaries convoked another assembly, whither came seventy-six bishops, and he was cut off from the Church. A synodal letter addressed "to the bishops of Rome and Alexandria, to all the bishops, priests, and deacons forming the Church under the heavens," announced to them the deposition of the Bishop of Antioch. Paul, however, supported by Zenobia, did not resign the episcopal dignity. The case was brought before Aurelian, who, with a good sense which we must admire, avoided giving a decision, and carefully abstained, while speaking of these disputes, from making any reference to the fact that there existed imperial edicts against the Christians. "These matters concern bishops," he said; "let him hold the see of Antioch with whom the bishops of Rome and Italy are in fellowship." The brother of Seneca, the tribune at Jerusalem, had

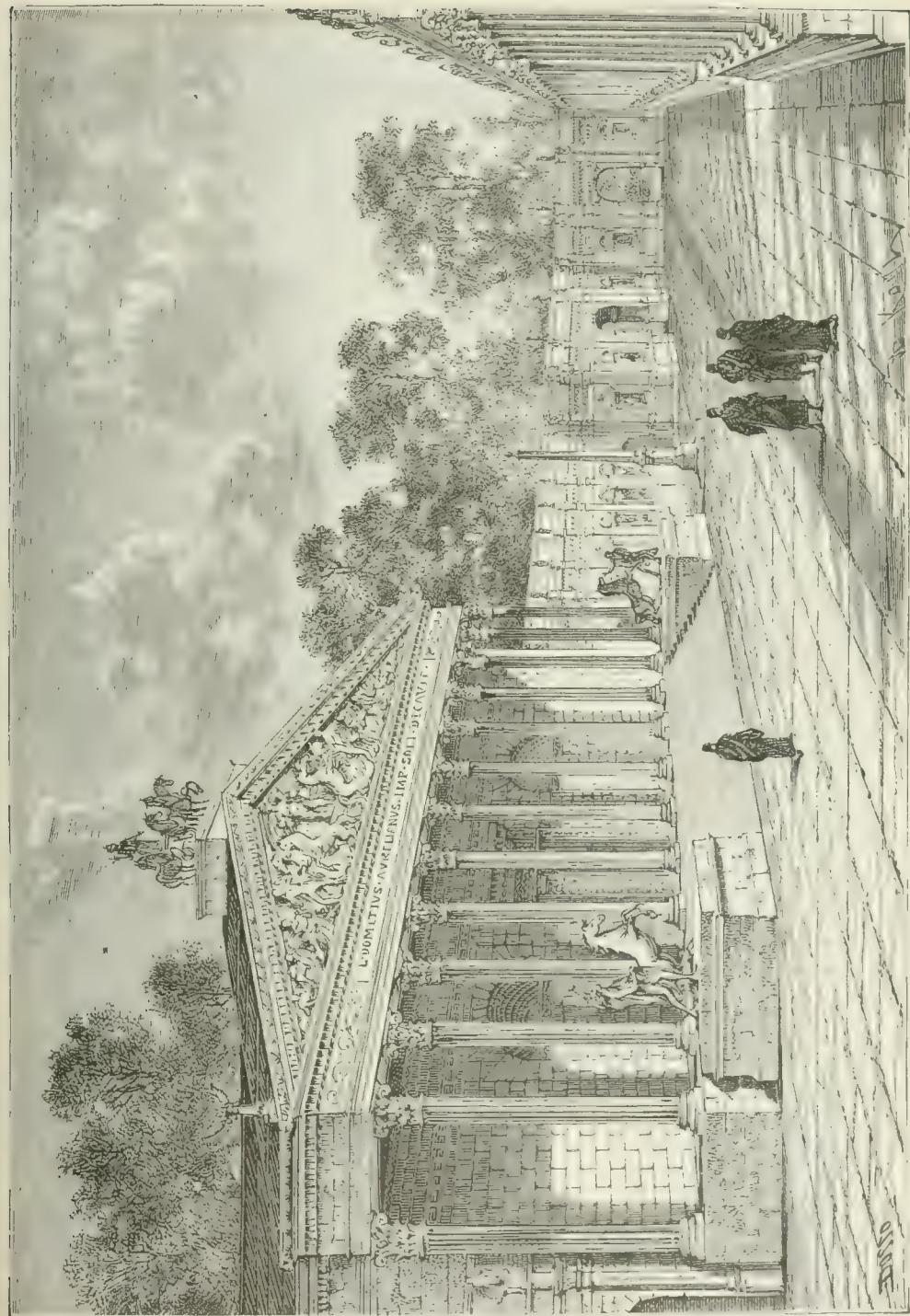
¹ At the same time admitting his miraculous birth, & παρθένος (Saint Athan., *Contra Apollin.* i. 3).

also made answer on the subject of Saint Paul accused by the Jews: "I am not minded to be a judge of these matters." The brave and honest soldier whose history we are writing had discovered for himself this admirable truth, which so many monarchs have overlooked, and still at this day even fail to recognize.¹ He at once reaped the fruit of it. The bishop's friends had been, like Paul himself, the queen's partisans; Aurelian punished them indirectly, at the same time conciliating the Christian community,—numerous in that great city.

An attempt has been made to see in the Emperor's response an acknowledgment of the primacy of the Roman See. It was, however, natural that Aurelian, having to decide a point of doctrine between Christians, should address himself to the metropolitan bishops, and that he should constitute the heads of the Christian communities of Italy arbitrators of the dispute, without attaching other importance to the affair. His judgment nevertheless constituted a precedent extremely useful to the pontifical authority.

Affairs being regulated at Antioch, Aurelian set out in pursuit of the enemy. He came up with their rear-guard not far from Chalcis, and dislodged it from a height where it had been posted. The Palmyrenes made no further halt till they arrived under the walls of Emesa; here Zenobia had gathered seventy thousand men, resting on a securely fortified place, and having in front of them a wide plain suited for cavalry movements. The battle this time was desperate. In the one army the ancient renown of Rome, in the other the new fame of Palmyra, fired the hearts of all. For a moment Aurelian had reason to fear that his soldiers might give way before the shock; his cavalry was almost destroyed: but a vigorous charge, which he led in person against the centre of the too-extended line of the enemy, decided the victory. It had been so dearly bought, however, that the Romans were not in a condition to pursue the vanquished. In the heat of the combat Aurelian had vowed a temple to the Sun, and it was related afterwards that the god himself had been seen in the midst of the legions, restoring their disordered lines. The Sun was the

¹ Euseb., *Hist. eccl.* vii. 27 and 29. The synodal letter is quoted by Eusebius. It contains, as was customary, many complaints, true or false, against the bishop, on the subject of his morals. Hefele (*Concilien geschichte*, i. 109-117) enumerates three synods of Antioch on this affair, but he is unable to give the date of the second, and we do not mention it.



THE TEMPLE OF THE SUN AT ROME (RESTORATION BY GERHARD, ÉCOLE DES BEAUX-ARTS).

great divinity of Palmyra; it now appeared that he had abandoned his people. But the gods, it is well known, are always on the side of the heavy battalions; and with a sentiment made up both of pride and humility, the victors took pleasure in transforming into divine assistance the aid which they had found in their own courage.¹

In a council of war held by Zenobia at Emesa it had been decided to fall back upon Palmyra. It was confidently believed that the heavy Roman army could not traverse "the land of thirst," or at least that it would subsist there with difficulty, exposed as it would be to incessant attacks from the nomads. The "Syrian robbers," as Vopiscus calls them, did, in fact, much harm to the Romans, but were not able to prevent their reaching the desert capital. Palmyra was surrounded by a deep moat and a wall covered with innumerable machines of war, which sent off an incessant shower of arrows, darts, and flames.² The Emperor had not expected a defence so determined. On arriving in sight of the city, he wrote to the queen: "Aurelian, Emperor of the Roman world and conqueror of the East, to Zenobia and those who are engaged in her cause. You ought to have done willingly that which I order in this letter. I command you to surrender, and I promise to spare your lives. You, Zenobia, will withdraw with your family into a place which I shall indicate to you, by the advice of the honorable Senate. You will surrender to the Roman treasury all that you possess of precious stones, gold, silver, silk, horses, and camels. The Palmyrenes will preserve their rights."³

The reply was no less proud: "Zenobia. Queen of the East. No person has ever dared to demand what your letter asks. You wish me to surrender myself, as if you did not know that Queen Cleopatra preferred to die rather than owe her life to a master. I am momentarily expecting assistance from the Persians; the Saracens and Armenians are on my side. The Syrian robbers have defeated your army, Aurelian: what then will be your situation when we have received the reinforcements which are coming to us from all sides? You will then abandon this proud tone with which you demand my submission, as if your arms were everywhere victorious."⁴

¹ See in Zosimus (i. 57-58) the numerous oracles made to speak in all the temples of Syria.

² Doubtless employing the bitumen with which the region abounds.

³ Vopiscus, *Aur.* 26.

⁴ *Ibid.* 27.

After this interchange of haughty language nothing remained but to storm the city or to reduce it by famine. The Roman army invested the place. Zenobia counted on Persia; but Persia had changed rulers three times in as many years, amidst conspiracies of the nobles, and religious quarrels agitating the people. Sapor, the conqueror of Valerian, had died in 271. His son Hormisdas, devoted to peace, reigned fourteen months, and the successor of Hormisdas, Bahram Varanes, less than four years. Of Hormisdas is related an anecdote worthy of the *Arabian Nights*. Being suspected of entering into some conspiracy with the satraps, who

were discontented at the protracted duration of Sapor's reign (thirty years), the prince cut off his hand and sent it to his father as a sign of his fidelity. It was contrary to custom that a person in any way mutilated should succeed to the throne;

but Sapor, to honor his son's heroism, bequeathed to him the royal authority. This legend has preserved to us the memory of Hormisdas; at Ram Hoormuz, which he built, the Persians still show an orange-tree—an object of veneration to them—which he is said to have planted.²

Bahram was on the Persian throne when Aurelian appeared before Palmyra. But the kingdom was agitated by the preaching of Manes, who sought to blend in one the religions of Christ and of Zoroaster. The people, and even the court, were divided between the old and the new doctrines. Sapor had banished the sectary; Hormisdas had favored him. The magi, anxious for their authority, succeeded in re-establishing their influence over the mind of Bahram, who condemned Manes to be flayed alive, and was shortly after himself assassinated by a partisan of the reformer. This double tragedy came later than the siege of Palmyra; but domestic dissensions of this nature explain the reserved attitude

¹ Legend: *The worshipper of Ormuzd, the excellent Varanes, king of kings, of Iran and Turan, celestial germ of the gods, around the head of the king.* On the reverse: *The divine Varanes: in the centre, a pyre; on the left, Varanes, standing; at the right, another figure.* (Silver coin.)

² Malcolm, *History of Persia*, i. 100.



COIN OF BAHRAM, OR VARANES ^{1.}

of the nation which had but recently held a Roman Emperor in captivity. They contented themselves with sending some slight reinforcements to Palmyra, which were, however, intercepted on the way. In respect to Armenia, we have already indicated the reasons which made the friendship of Rome indispensable to this country, while the Arabs and the Saracens were either bought or intimidated, and at very slight expense in either case.

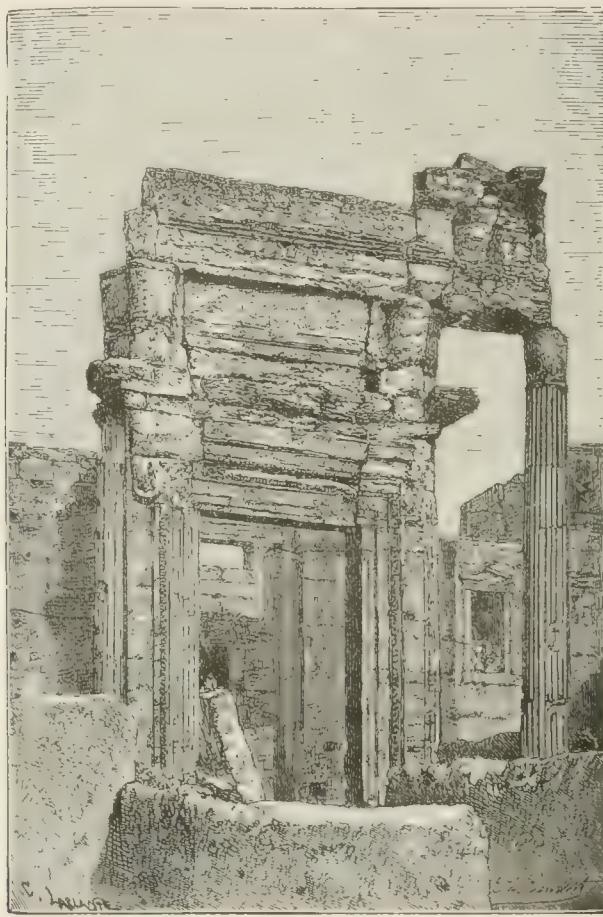
Zenobia, then, stood alone. When she knew that she could no longer count on those whom she had believed her allies, and when she saw that her provisions were rapidly decreasing, she resolved



RUINS OF THE TEMPLE OF DIANA AT PALMYRA.

to escape to the Persians and endeavor to persuade them to make a vigorous effort, while her own army still held out. Mounted on a rapid dromedary, she made her way to the Euphrates, and was nearly at its bank when the horsemen who had been sent in her pursuit came up with her. This sad news caused great confusion in Palmyra. Some were disposed to prolong the defence, but the larger number threw down their arms and opened the gates. Aurelian made no change in the terms he had at first offered: he treated the city with mildness, left it in undisturbed possession of its rights, and contented himself with taking the treasures of Zenobia.

Returning to Emesa, where from the resources of a rich province the troops could compensate themselves for the privations they had lately suffered, the Emperor constituted a tribunal to judge Zenobia and her ministers. In her first interview with Aurelian she asserted herself as proudly as ever. "How dared



GATE OF ZENO比亚'S PALACE (ACTUAL CONDITION).

you," he said, "insult the majesty of the Roman Emperors?" And she replied: "I acknowledge you as an Emperor, since you are able to conquer; but the Gallieni, the Aureoli, and others like them, were not emperors." The compliment was not excessive. It is said, however, that before the tribunal she basely threw upon her counsellors the responsibility of the war. This is probably a calumny of the victors, or it may have been a rumor set in circu-

lation by Aurelian. The soldiers were eager for blood, and he had determined not to put the queen to death, for he proposed to have this second Cleopatra as an ornament to his triumph. The judges were directed, therefore, to find only the ministers guilty; and these persons were put to death.—among them Longinus, who met his fate with the serenity of a sage (273).

The fall of the Queen of the East produced a great impression, and the desertion of all her allies proved the fear which the resuscitated Empire inspired. Aurelian therefore had quitted



RUINS OF THE TEMPLE OF THE SUN AT PALMYRA

Syria with a mind freed from anxiety, and had traversed Asia Minor, and even a portion of Thrace, when the news came to him that the Palmyrenes were again in arms, that the Roman garrison and its commander Sandarion had been murdered, and that, finally, one Antiochus had been proclaimed emperor.¹ Palmyra had not been willing to submit to fall back from her rank as an imperial city to the condition of a mere trading mart. She had for a moment drunk of the cup of grandeur, and was intoxicated by it still, and her dreams were haunted by the memory of her caravan leaders made Caesars of Rome. The act of folly which she had just now committed was cruelly expiated. Aurelian's anger was terrible; his severity in Rome had been already manifested,

¹ Vopiscus, *Aur.* 31; cf. Zosimus, i. 60, 61.

and at Palmyra, as he had been more clement, he was now even more pitiless. We know not who the troops were to whom he intrusted his vengeance, but a letter shows that this revenge had been, as it were, the execution of an entire people. "Aurelian Augustus to Ceionius Bassus. Let the soldiers use their swords no longer: enough Palmyrenes have been killed. We have not even

spared mothers; we have slain children and old men, and put to death the inhabitants of the country. To whom shall we now leave the country and the city? It is proper to spare the few who remain, and believe them corrected by the sight of so much punishment.

"I desire that the temple of the Sun, pillaged by the eagle-bearer of the tenth legion, by the standard-bearers, by the dragon-bearer,¹ and by the trumpeters, be restored as it was. You have in the treasures of Zenobia three hundred pounds weight of gold; you have also eighteen hundred pounds of silver, obtained from the possessions of the Palmy-

renes; and you have also the royal jewels. Employ all this in the ornamentation of the temple; you will thus do a thing agreeable to the immortal gods and to me. I will write to the Senate to send a priest to make the dedication of the temple."²

Palmyra never recovered from this blow. The families who had made her fortune doubtless perished in the massacre, and of the inhabitants who survived none were able to take their place.

¹ The soldier who bore the standard representing a dragon's head, terminated by a red streamer, which in the wind resembled the tortuous folds of the serpent. Cf. Treb. Pollio, *Gall.* 8, and Amm. Marcellinus, xvi. 12: . . . *Purpureum signum draconis summitati hastae longioris aptatum.* It seems to have resembled a Chinese flag.

² Vopiscus, *Aur.* 31.



THE DRAGON-BEARER
(BAS-RELIEF OF THE TRAJAN COLUMN).

Commerce became used to other routes, the sand invaded this depopulated oasis, and for ten centuries the world knew not even the place where the Queen of the East had built her palaces of marble; but a spring which still flows has preserved through the ages, it has been conjectured, the name of him who made this vast desolation.¹

After the tragedy of Emesa, Aurelian had hastened his return to Europe without stopping in Egypt, whence Probus, as brave a



RUINS OF THE PALACE OF ZENOBIA.

soldier as himself, had expelled the Palmyrenes. Believing this country pacified, he had not thought it advisable to appear there: but when it was understood that the Emperor was on his way to Gaul, a merchant enriched by traffic in the papyrus of Egypt and the commodities of India, Firmus, a Greek, whom the political fortunes of the sheiks of Palmyra had dazzled, undertook to repeat their enterprise. He secured the aid of the Blemmyes and of the Saracens, stirred up Alexandria, ever ready for riots, and detained the corn-bearing fleet,—which was a serious matter. Firmus assumed the purple at the moment when Palmyra revolted,—whence it may

¹ The *Ain Ournus*, to be seen near Palmyra. It has been conjectured that *Ournus* is an altered abbreviation of Aurelianus (*Récit de Fatalla Sayeghri*, discovered by Lamartine, *Voyage en Orient*, ii. 382).

be concluded that the two movements were concerted.¹ Aurelian had no difficulty in confining the usurper within one of the four quarters of Alexandria, the Bruchium, separated by a wall from the rest of the city, which will be remembered as the position where Julius Caesar so long braved all the forces of Egypt. There stood the palace of the Ptolemies, the museum,—which a long portico, made of the most precious marble, connected with the royal residence,—and the palace of the Caesars, built in the place where once stood the two obelisks called Cleopatra's Needles.² Aurelian did not undertake to storm this peculiar position; but famine eventually delivered Firmus into his hands, and he caused the rebel to be crucified. He then dismantled the Bruchium, the royal palace, and all that could serve as protection in case of a new disturbance, that the provisioning of Rome might never again be at the mercy of this seditious city.³ This time at least his anger was directed towards the city itself rather than its inhabitants;⁴ but he augmented by one twelfth the frumentary tax of Egypt, and laid upon the country a new annual tribute,—namely, the sending to Rome of a certain quantity of glass, papyrus, linen, hemp, and other products of the country.⁵

Zenobia being a captive, “the robber Firmus” having been crucified, and the populace of Alexandria being held in check by a Roman garrison, order began to be restored throughout the East, which had twice within a few months been overrun by a great and victorious army. From every side came in embassies, protestations,

¹ The *Augustan History* does not say this; but the narrative of Vopiscus is extremely confused. I give what is probable, but not certain. A few words in the letter of Aurelian to the Senate and the Roman people, after the defeat of Firmus, would lead us to suppose that the subjugation of Egypt had been preceded by that of the Gauls: . . . *Pacato toto orbe terrarum* (Vopiscus, *Firm.* 5): but other information furnished by the *Augustan History*, by Zosimus (G. 61), by medals, and by the course of events, is contrary to this view. There are coins of the fifth year of the reign of Tetricus; that is to say, 272–273.

² In respect to this temple of the Caesars, constructed in the time of Augustus, see *Bull. de corresp. hellén.*, 1878, p. 175.

³ Amm. Marcellinus, xxii. 16.

⁴ He permitted the women and children and the old men to go out of the Bruchium. At least, Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* vii. 32) relates this fact, on the authority of Anatolius, an eye-witness, who later was the bishop of Laodiceia, but he does not name Aurelian; and as he represents Anatolius as after this attending the Council of Antioch, held to examine Paul of Samosata, we perhaps ought to place this event in the time of Claudius, when Probus expelled the Palmyrenes from Alexandria and the Delta.

⁵ Vopiscus, *Aur.* 44.

of friendship, and presents; among other things, as a gift from the king of Persia, a purple mantle, which seems to have been the predecessor of our Indian cashmeres.¹ Nothing, therefore, detained Aurelian longer in this part of the Empire, and he was at liberty to turn his attention at last towards the Western provinces, where Tetricus had been reigning for more than five years.²

Victorina, "the mother of the camps," was dead,³ and her resolute soul no longer sustained the courage of the gentle senator whom she had made Emperor of Gaul. Having made his residence at Bordeaux, so that he might not be disturbed by the uproar on the frontier and the clamor of the legions, he waited till Aurelian should come to relieve him of his imperial functions. Medals represent him wearing, not the cuirass, but the toga, and holding in one hand a sceptre, and in the other a cornucopia. When, as they received their pay, the soldiers saw their Emperor represented on the coin with the attributes of peace, and a legend signifying that moderation in success makes a ruler great, they must have regarded this gentle personage as unworthy to have the command of men. They retained him, however; their pride was gratified in maintaining the Gallic empire which they had created. Both they and their chiefs had all their interests in these provinces, where they had spent their whole lives, and they said to each other that Tetricus would never disturb their tranquil existence by leading them to the opposite end of the Empire to fight with Persians or Blemyes. Moreover, Gaul was also their domain; they conducted themselves in it as masters, with all the insolence of a soldiery commanding its officers. To resist their demands, on one occasion Autun closed its gates; they besieged the city for seven months, and Tetricus made no attempt to end this strange war. Claudius, to whom Autun appealed, was too much occupied by the Goths to listen to these far-off complaints; the unhappy city was sacked,⁴ and many of its

¹ Vopiscus, *Aur.* 29.

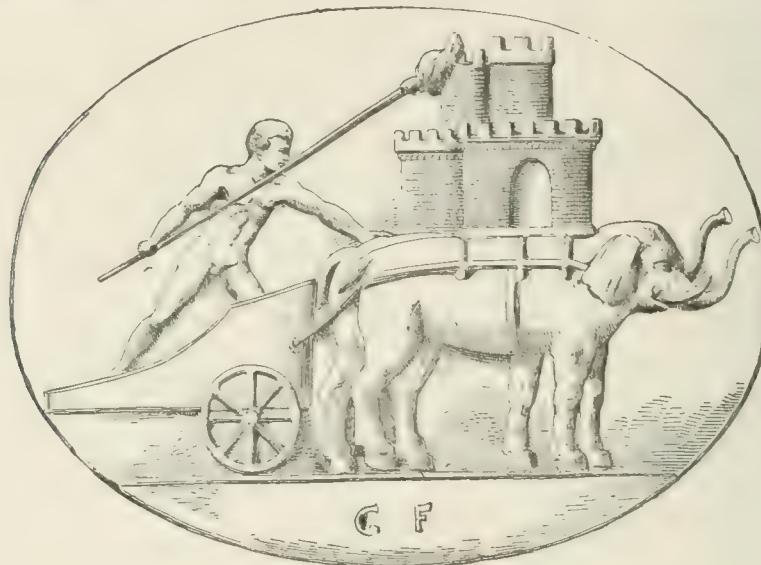
² See De Boze, *Tetricus*, in the *Mém. de l'Acad. des inscr.* xxvi. 515 *et seq.* Numerous medals of this Emperor bear the words: *libertas, laetitia, felicitas publica*, and milestones prove that he repaired the roads in Gaul in order to facilitate commerce.

³ Certain accounts represent her as having been put to death by Tetricus,—which is improbable. He instituted solemn funeral ceremonies in her honor, and decreed her apotheosis (*consecratio*).

⁴ Eumenes (*Pan. vet.* vii. 4: *Gratiarum actio Constantino*, and *Pro Restaur. scholis*, 14)

citizens perished (269). One of them fled as far as to the foot of the Pyrenees, to Tarbes, "which the Adour traverses, which hears afar the roar of angry Ocean;" the fugitive married there, and was the ancestor of the poet Ausonius, one of the last literary names of the Empire.¹ Other cities were of the same mind with Autun; an inscription at Barcelona attests the fidelity of this city to Claudius and to the Empire.²

The self-interested fidelity of the Gallic legions did not at all reassure their Emperor. We have reason to believe that he sought



ELEPHANTS ATTACHED TO A CHARIOT AND BEARING A TOWER.³

the confidence of Claudius by secret messages, and we know that, quoting Vergil, he wrote to Aurelian: "Invincible hero, deliver me from these miscreants."⁴ An understanding was readily established between two men, one of whom had no wish for a colleague, while the other was eager to be again a subject. When the armies met, near Châlons-sur-Marne, Tetricus communicated his order of battle to Aurelian; and just as the action began, deserted his troops, who at once disbanded.⁵ The whole Empire was again

represents certain Bagaudes, or insurgent peasants, as mingled with these soldiers (*latrocinium Bagaudicæ rebellionis*).

¹ Auson., *Parent.* 4. The poet states this flight as occurring under Victorinus.

² Orelli, No. 1,020. ³ Engraved stone (La Chausse, Reeuwil, etc. vol. ii. pl. 129).

⁴ *Eripe me his, invictæ, malis* (words of Palinurus in the *Aeneid*, vi. 265).

⁵ Aur. Victor, *De Caes.* 35.



SARCOPHAGUS OF ALEXANDER SEVERUS AND MAMAEA (SO CALLED), MUSEUM OF THE CAPITOL, ROOM II.

united under a single chief (274); it was now twenty-one years since this had been the situation.

Aurelian celebrated the great event by a triumph, where he endeavored to surpass in magnificence those ancient solemnities which Rome had not for a long time seen.¹ Slowly there passed under the eyes of the dazzled crowd the innumerable wreaths of gold offered by the Roman cities; twenty elephants and giraffes, tamed animals; the chariot of a Gothic king drawn by four stags; that of the Queen of Palmyra, made of chased gold and silver, and gleaming with a thousand gems; pictures representing the battles won, the cities taken, and representations of conquered nations. Then followed the Senate, the magistrates, and the pontiffs; the people in white togas,

and the colleges or corporations, preceded by their banners; the army with its standards; the *cataphracti* with their heavy armor, and the soldiers with their military decorations; lastly, eight

GOLD COIN.²THE YOUNGER TETRICUS.³

hundred pair of gladiators, followed by the crowd of captives of all nations adjacent to the Empire, some in chains, others bearing the captured spoils; and among them women of Gothic race who had been taken fighting among their fathers and husbands. But all eyes were fixed upon Tetricus and his son, who walked clad in the scarlet chlamys and wearing the Gallic braccae, that the crowd might recognize the Emperors of Gaul. Zenobia followed them, laden with precious stones, a gold chain on her feet, another on her hands, a third about her neck; and, as a last insult, it was a Persian buffoon who held up these chains, whose weight would have overwhelmed her, to recall to the fallen queen in what a vain hope she had trusted. We cannot doubt that Aurelian enjoyed his victory. More clement, however, than Marius and Caesar, he did

¹ Orosius (vii. 9) enumerates, from Romulus to Vespasian, three hundred and twenty triumphs, and Pitiscus (*Lexic. Ant.*, s. v. *Triumphus*) has made out only thirty from Vespasian to Belisarius, who celebrated the last of them.

² The Elder Tetricus on Horseback.

³ C. PIVS ESVVIVS TETRICVS CAES. Bust of the younger Tetricus, bare-headed, from a bronze medallion found on the banks of the Rhône at Andancette, the ancient *Figlinav*. (Museum of Grenoble, J. de Witte, *op. cit.*, pl. xlvi. No. 4.)

not, as he went up to the Capitol, give the fatal sign ordering his captives to the Tullianum, where Jugurtha and Vercingetorix had perished.¹

The pageant being ended, he gave back to Tetricus his honors, bestowed upon him a palace on the Caelian Mount, and appointed him governor of Lucania,² telling him it was better to rule over an Italian province than to reign on the other side of the Alps.—which the ex-Augustus did not contradict. The Emperor often called Tetricus his colleague, sometimes his comrade-in-arms, and even imperator: and these distinctions authorized the Senate, after the death of Aurelian, to place Tetricus among the *divi*.³ Vercingetorix ended otherwise; but he had lived differently.

To Zenobia Aurelian also gave a villa near Tibur, in the neighborhood of that of Hadrian. She lived there like a Roman lady of rank, her daughters married into the most illustrious houses, and two centuries later some of the nobles of Rome called themselves descendants of the Queen of Palmyra; among them we know of one who was a contemporary of Saint Ambrose, Saint Zenobius, Bishop of Florence.⁴

The triumph had been the Emperor's festival; later the people had theirs,—scenic representations, great hunts, mock sea-fights, combats between gladiators, and gratuitous distributions. Aurelian decided that, for the future, citizens should receive every day a loaf of wheat bread and a piece of pork. All distributions were increased by an ounce; that is to say, a twelfth. He even formed the design of buying lands in Etruria and establishing a vast vineyard, so that he could give the people a measure of wine, as he did a measure of oil, daily. A counsellor wiser than the

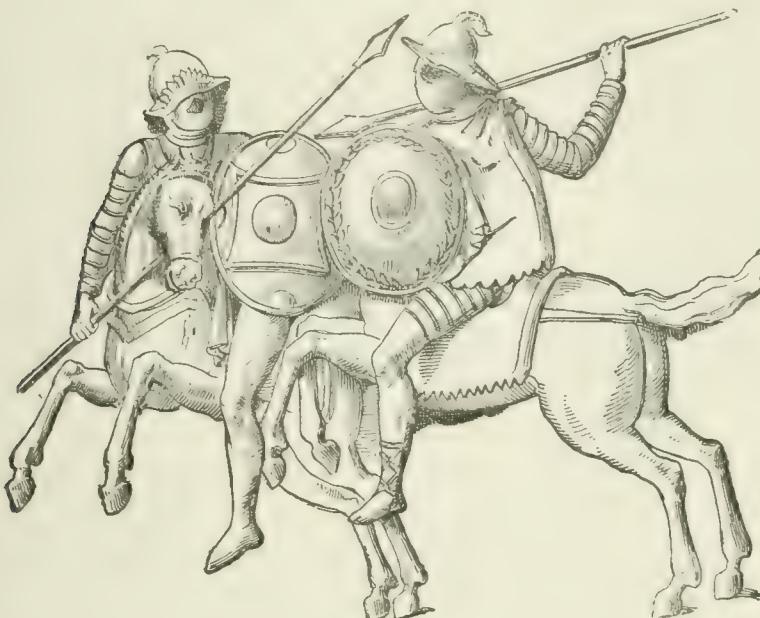
¹ It has been asserted that the arch of triumph whose remains are seen at Besançon was erected on occasion of this pageant.

² Treb. Pollio (*Tyr. trig.* 23) says “of all peninsular Italy.” It is probable that we ought to read *corrector Italiae regionis Lucuniae*, as in the case of Postumius Titianus, consul in 301, who was *corrector Italiae regionis Transpadanea* (*C. I. L.* vi. 1418, 1419). Borghesi (*Oeuvres*, ii. 416) forms out of the eleven *regiones* of Augustus in Italy eight provinces, which Diocletian retained.

³ This at least seems to be inferable from the coins of Tetricus bearing the word *consecratio* (Cohen, v. 171). Cf. De Boze, *Hist. de Tétricus* in the *Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscr.* xxvi. 521. Eckhel (vii. 457) differs from this opinion.

⁴ Zosimus mentions only a son of Zenobia brought with her to Rome, but does not give his name, and says that the other captives were drowned in the Bosphorus. What was the end of Waballath is not known; Eckhel (vii. 493) supposes that Aurelian gave him a principality in Syria.

Emperor opposed this project. "After this," said the praetorian prefect, "we should be obliged to give them also chickens and geese." Aurelian yielded; but he caused the treasury to offer wine at reduced price,—a measure of political economy almost equally objectionable. After food, clothes; he distributed tunics of Afri-



GLADIATORS ON HORSEBACK (POMPEII).

can linen, and long strips of cloth, "which they were to use in the circus, waving them to indicate their approbation."¹

We have to remark here that these largesses to the populae were not actuated by a desire to win their favor. Aurelian's strength lay in the armies, it did not depend upon Rome; and in spite of his liberality towards the Romans, he was indifferent as to their good or ill will.

At Emesa Aurelian had come upon his mother's god, and he had attributed his victory to the Sun. The extravagances of Elagabalus had not brought this divinity into disfavor; it was held in great honor. And this was natural; for as the pagan world

¹ . . . *Quibus uteretur populus ad farorem* (Vopiscus, *Aur.* 47). Formerly it had been a corner of the toga that was waved in sign of applause. After Aurelian's time the distribution of mere corn was certainly resumed. Theodoric gave a hundred and twenty thousand modii annually. Cf. Hirschfeld, pp. 20, 21.

was tending more and more to a belief in the divine unity, the Sun, shedding light, heat, and life through all nature, seemed the author of these gifts.¹ Aurelian had offered stately sacrifices to the Sun in Emesa, and he created at Rome a new priesthood in the honor of this deity,² building a temple which was esteemed by contemporaries the most splendid in Rome, especially

on account of the vast wealth deposited in it,—a great quantity of gems, and fifteen thousand pounds weight of gold. Through fear of the jealousy of the other gods, Aurelian offered gifts in the temple of each.

So many prodigalities—not to speak of the money given to the people and the soldiers, or of the expense for the fortifications of Rome, for the cleansing of the Tiber, for the quays

which he constructed at certain points along the river, for the construction of thermae along the right bank, for that of a forum at Ostia, for the increase of the flotilla bringing to Rome the corn of the frumentary provinces—compel us to admit that the successful wars which Aurelian had carried on had placed great resources in his hands. Historians tell us only of the pillage of Palmyra; but Alexandria must have furnished large booty, Antioch, Aneyra, Tyana, the cities of Syria, at that time so prosperous, large ransoms, and Gaul, like Egypt, certainly paid for its return into the Empire by an increase in the taxes.

¹ This was Pliny's faith (*Hist. nat.* ii. 4),—a philosopher who did not believe in many things.

² Vopiscus, *Aur.* 35.

³ Marble medallion representing in relief the masque of the Sun, according to the type of the Rhodian coins (Roman sculpture in the Museum of the Louvre, Frohner, *Notice de la sculpt. ant.*, etc., No. 421).

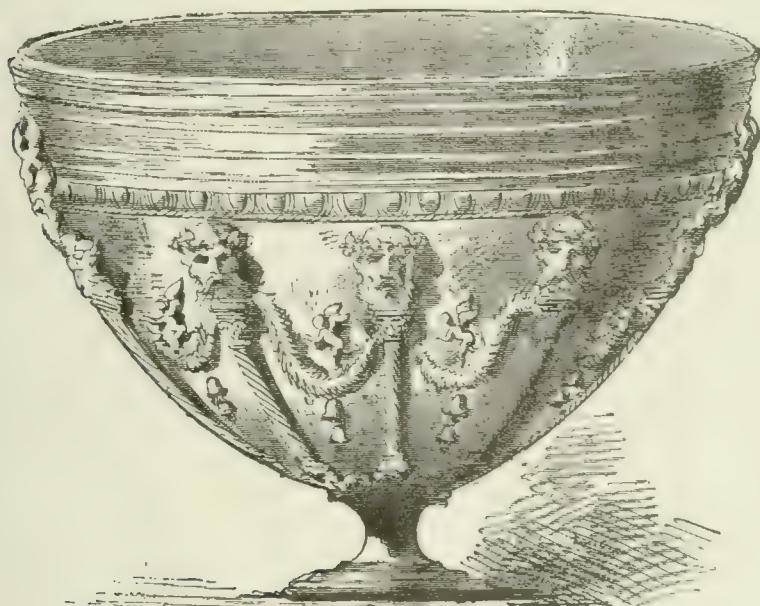


THE SUN.³

Aurelian's economy procured him other resources. He lived simply, and required the persons around him to do likewise. He kept his slaves in the same humble position they had held before his accession, and required the Empress to superintend the affairs of the palace; he refused her a silk mantle because at this time that material was worth its weight in gold, and he made his friends presents which gave them comfort, but not wealth, that envy might not be excited against them.² He himself never had a silver vase weighing over thirty pounds; the gods came into possession of the presents that were



THE EMPRESS
SEVERINA.¹



SILVER VASE FROM THE HILDESHEIM TREASURE.³

made him. All the magnificent objects displayed at his triumph were carried into the temples, as in the old days of republican virtue, to serve as resources in case of extreme peril.

Sumptuary laws were an evil common at Rome, and Aurelian did not fail to establish many.⁴ Thus, to guard against a scarcity of the

¹ SEVERINA AVG[usta]. Diademed bust of the Empress Severina, wife of Aurelian, placed on a crescent. (Coin of copper alloy. Antoninianus of the weight of 4.05).

² . . . *Dicitarum irratiā patrimonii moderatione ritarent* (Vopiscus, *Aur.* 45).

³ Reproduction in the Museum of Cluny.

⁴ Vopiscus, *Aur.* 45-6. Cf. Lamprid., *Elagabalus*, 4. He limited the number of eunuchs, etc.

precious metals, he forbade the use of gold on furniture and garments. His biographer goes so far as to assert that he renewed the women's senate to which Elagabalus had given the duty of regulating the matrons' toilettes,—a puerility which this soldier would never have copied from the effeminate Syrian. But he displayed great pomp in religious solemnities, where he appeared wearing a crown, and attired in garments covered with gold and precious stones. This Oriental luxury was the fashion of the day, reappearing even in the works of art,

whose decline it marks, and Diocletian carried it much farther. These Emperors both believed they should be more respected if an imposing ceremonial marked distinctly to the eye the distance between the subject and the ruler.

This ostentation, often regarded as necessary, and really so in a certain social condition, has never been able, however, to protect any others than those who protected themselves by their personal valor, or whom the faith of nations surrounded with a sure though invisible defence. From this point of view Aurelian could have done without it, for he had the people and the troops

FIGHTING HERO.²

on his side. An absolute ruler, however, is never secure against

¹ DEO ET DOMINO NATO AVRELIANO. Radiate head of the Emperor. (Small bronze.)

² Fighting hero, found near Vienna, in Dauphiny (*Gazette archéol.*, 1876). Clarac (*Musée de sculpt.* pl. 826, No. 2,083 B) has given this statue the name of Deiphobus.

AURELIAN.¹

conspiracies, and one was shortly to be formed among those immediately about him. The magnificent entertainment which he had just given the Romans preceded his death by only a few months.

Aurelian employed this time in consolidating the work of restoration which he had pursued so vigorously for the five years preceding. A sedition in Gaul called him into that country.¹ It is not known what he did there. We hear of a success of Probus over the Franks, near the mouths of the Rhine, and of a victory gained over the Alemanni near Vindonissa (Windisch) by Constantius Chlorus on the day when his son Constantine was born. Later traditions attribute to Aurelian the reconstruction of Dijon and of Genabum, which seems to have taken his name, *Civitas Aurelianorum*. These were two important positions for commerce and war: at Orléans, the geographic centre of Gaul, ended the principal military roads of the country, and Dijon was the great station between the valley of the Rhône and that of the Seine. Forum Julii and the Viennese province owed him perhaps some favor; inscriptions found there celebrate the Restorer of the World.

Aurelian doubtless revisited the banks of the Rhine, the theatre of his earliest successes; then he repaired to the upper Danube, for we find him afterwards in Vindelicia and Illyricum. He wished to inspect personally this frontier, which had been lately so disturbed, where it was well also from time to time to exhibit the imperial crown, especially when worn by a conqueror. Aurelian had the intention of doing more than this, and was about to go as far as Ctesiphon for the purpose of visiting upon the allies of Zenobia the injuries they had done the Empire; but he was stopped by a conspiracy before reaching Byzantium.

Ecclesiastical authors assert that divine justice put a stop to his evil designs against the Church.³ The Emperor's conduct in



COIN OF
AURELIAN.²

¹ Zonaras, xii. 27.

² Reverse of a coin (small bronze) of Aurelian, bearing the legend: GENIVS ILLVR.

³ Euseb., *Hist. eccl.* vii. 30, and Zonaras, xii. 27. In book viii. chap. iv. Eusebius says that from the time of Decius and Valerian until the last years of Diocletian, the devil slept, and Sulpicius Severus, who lived in Gaul, makes no mention of the great persecution which has been placed in Aurelian's reign.

the affair of Paul of Samosata, the peace which the Christians enjoyed during his reign, forbid us to believe that he was proposing to undertake a persecution; and to account for his death it is not necessary to employ the method which in all ages has been used to explain sudden catastrophes. Following the example of Septimius Severus, whom he seems to have taken for a model, he maintained discipline in the administration as well as in the army; he kept watch over the imperial agents in the provinces, and punished extortioners rigorously, even going so far as to put them to death by crucifixion. Having cause for displeasure against one of his secretaries, Mnestheus, he threatened him with punishment. The freedman knew that the Emperor spoke no idle words; he counterfeited Aurelian's handwriting, prepared a list of persons known to be out of favor, placing his own name on the list to make the story more credible, and exhibited it to the persons whose names were inscribed thereon, as an order of death which he had discovered. To escape from the punishment which they believed impending over them, these persons conspired and assassinated Aurelian (January or March, 275). He was but sixty-one years of age, and had reigned five years.

During the reign of Aurelian there was a sedition of a peculiar character. We have seen¹ how greatly in these times the gold and silver coins had been altered. The master of the Roman mints, Felicissimus, had formed the idea of sharing in the profits which the Emperors believed they were making by this scandalous operation. Very little gold and silver was furnished him for the coin he had to make; he put into it even less, and doubtless associated with himself as sharers in the profits those who were employed under him. Otherwise it is difficult to understand why a sedition should have broken out when Aurelian sought to bring this abuse to an end.² The revolt was formidable; the manufacturers interested in the trade in precious metals, the silversmiths and goldsmiths, the bankers, and all who handled silver, threatened

¹ pp. 209 *et seq.*

² . . . *Monetae opifices qui, quum, auctore Felicissimo rationali, nummariam notam corosissent, poenae motu bellum fecerant* (Aur. Victor, *Caes.* 35). Cf. Vopiscus, *Aur.* 38. The procurator monetae, of equestrian rank, commanded a whole army of workmen. Upon this organization, see *Mém. de l'Acad. des inscr.* ix. 218; Fr. Lenormant, *La Monnaie dans l'Antiquité*, i. 251; and Cug, the *Examinateur per Italiam*, p. 36.

with reforms which were likely to unsettle the market, appear to have made common cause with the officers of the mint; and the people, as usual, interested themselves in the quarrel, through hatred of the police. A battle actually took place in Rome on the Caelian hill, and seven thousand soldiers perished in it,—which implies great carnage among the rebels.

We are very ignorant in respect to this affair.¹ Was the Senate concerned in it? Possibly; for old authors mention the execution of many senators, without telling us the cause, and the Senate itself lost at this time the right it had possessed since the time of Augustus to coin bronze money. At least we find no longer, after the reign of Aurelian, the letters S.C. on coins,—a proof that the senatorial mints were united after this time to those of the Emperor.² The biographer of Aurelian adds that the Emperor afterwards coined better money, and withdrew the false from circulation. Aurelian had not time to accomplish this double work, which Tacitus took up after him,³ and to which succeeding Emperors devoted much care,—without, however, completing it until the reigns of Diocletian and Constantine.

These measures prove the resolution of Aurelian to introduce order everywhere. The same spirit manifests itself in other acts. He caused to be burned in Trajan's forum, as Hadrian had done before him, the registers containing the accounts of the debtors of the state,—bad debts, and for the most part irrecoverable, but holding over a number of private individuals the perpetual fear of a judicial execution. The lodging of information against those violating the fiscal laws was forbidden. The *quadruplatores*—always so numerous at Rome—did not disappear at once, but their odious trade ceased to be encouraged. It is impossible that the

¹ The letter of Aurelian to the Roman people after the defeat of Firmus (see Vol. VI. p. 211) gives reason to suppose that the Senate, the knights, the people, and the praetorians were not amicable towards one another, since the Emperor recommends concord to them.

² The *triumviri monetales* disappeared at the same time; the last known, with certain date, was consul in 225 (Willmanns, No. 1,211).

³ . . . *Cavit* (Tacitus) *ut si quis argento publice privatimque aes miserisset, si quis auro argentum, si quis aeri plumbum, capitale esset cum honorum proscriptione* (Vopiscus, *Tac.* 9). From this attempt resulted a little more regularity in the coinage. The Antoniniani of Aurelian, of Tacitus, and of Claudius II. are somewhat more valuable than those of their predecessors. Cf. Mommsen, *Geschichte des röm. Münz.* iii. 96.

author of these measures could have put to death, in order to fill his treasury, senators guilty only of wealth.

Aurelian is however accused of cruelty, and as early as the fourth century this reproach rested upon his memory. Certainly he was not a mild ruler; but the times were not suited for mild government, and in a monarch responsible for the tranquillity of an empire, indulgence towards the guilty was treason towards the innocent. To confirm the reproaches made against him we need to have the names and number of the victims, the motives or the pretexts of their condemnation; for we have learned in the course of this history, from more than one instance, how little is left of these vague and often contradictory accusations when examined narrowly. Vopiscus, who had conversed with contemporaries of the Emperor whose memoir he writes, dares not affirm anything. "It is said," he relates, "that to rid himself of many senators he imputed to them designs of revolt;" but according to John of Antioch and Suidas, some men of rank were condemned on the revelations of Zenobia,—which gives us reason to think that during the war in the East plots had been formed at Rome, as in the time of Severus during the war in Gaul.¹ One fact justifies our hesitations. It is certain that a catastrophe took place in the imperial family, one member of it being condemned to death. Who was this person? Some say the niece, and some the nephew of Aurelian; others maintain that both perished; and still others assert that the person condemned was the daughter-in-law of the Emperor.² If this last story be the true one, it would seem that Aurelian, by this execution, avenged some stain upon the honor of his house. In any case, it was a domestic tragedy having some grave cause, for Aurelian was not one of those madmen who for a caprice shed the blood of their own family.

The Emperor Titus is not our ideal of a ruler; and we shall therefore not reproach Aurelian with having chastised offenders like the accomplices of Felicissimus, or promoters of revolution like those who doubtless intrigued with Zenobia. We shall commend him for having given up his freedmen and slaves to

¹ We have also seen that Zosimus speaks of many plots, admitting their existence.

² Suidas, s. v. *Aurel.* But another difficulty arises; for, according to Vopiscus, Aurelian had no children except one daughter.

the ordinary judge when they were guilty, for the imperial household had need to be always held strictly in hand, that they should not avail themselves of the numerous means of doing harm which came within their reach; and we shall accept the judgment of the Emperor Julian, who was not inclined to be favorable towards a ruler whose glory eclipsed that of Claudius, the head of his own house. In the *Caesars*, when Aurelian appears before the Olympian areopagus to be judged, the Sun takes up his defence. "The accused," he says to the gods, "is even with Justice, or you have forgotten my oracle of Delphi: a man ought to suffer the woes he has caused others to endure."¹

This judgment seems even too severe; for at the side of the strict right, Aurelian often placed clemency for those who had gone astray. We have seen him accord pardon to all the inhabitants of Antioch, and to the Palmyrenes after the first siege; we have seen that even after the second revolt he put a stop to the massacre; and at Alexandria he allowed part of those who were besieged to go out from the Bruchium,² although their departure must have permitted the resistance to be prolonged. His conduct in respect to Tetricus, Zenobia, and Antiochus³ contrasts favorably with that of his predecessors, and he violated Roman customs even more evidently when he proclaimed an amnesty for political offences.⁴ It was a worthy completion of the restoration of the Empire thus to efface the traces of twenty years of civil wars, during which many more persons had been unfortunate than criminal.

¹ Vopiscus says nearly the same thing (*Aur. 37*): *Aurelianuſ fuit princeps necessarius magis quam bonus.*

² See p. 310, note 4, which explains that this act of clemency was not perhaps Aurelian's.

³ Antiochus is that Palmyrene Caesar "whom he sent away," says Zosimus, "not deigning to punish."

⁴ *Amnestia sub eo delictorum publicorum decreta est* (Vopiscus, *Aur. 39*).

CHAPTER XCVIII.

TACITUS, PROBUS, AND CARUS (275-284 A.D.).

I.—AN ATTEMPT AT A SENATORIAL RESTORATION; TACITUS AND FLORIANUS (SEPT. 25, 275, TO JULY, 276).

THE death of Aurelian was followed by a strange situation;—for six months the Empire remained without a head. He had restored order with so vigorous a hand that all things went on as if he were still alive: the magistrates remained in the exercise of their functions; the people in their respective occupations; and, strangest of all, the army in a state of subordination. This peace during a long interregnum—the first and only one that the Empire ever knew—speaks more in praise of Aurelian than all our eulogies. At last men recognized in him the restorer of the Empire, the ruler who had put an end to usurpations, had pacified the provinces, had given back their military honor to the legions, and to Rome its grandeur. There was for the moment something like a new birth of public spirit and patriotism. The army, ashamed that it had not been able to preserve its illustrious chief from a vulgar conspiracy, punished itself by refusing to exercise the right which seemed to have become its recognized prerogative,—namely, that of electing an emperor; and the Senate received with amazement the following communication:¹ “The Brave and Fortunate Legions to the Senate and People of Rome: The crime of one man and the inconsiderateness of many have deprived us of our late Emperor Aurelian; you, whose paternal cares direct the state, honored men, deign to place this Emperor among the number of the gods, and to designate the successor whom you judge most worthy of the imperial purple: none of those

¹ By letter (*Vopiscus, Aur.* 41), or by a deputation from the army (*Aur. Victor*).

whose crime or whose misfortune has caused our loss shall reign over us."

The Conscript Father to whom his rank gave the right of expressing his opinion first, an old man of consular rank, by name Tacitus,¹ believed to be a descendant of the great historian, proposed to gratify the wish of the legions in respect to the honors to be decreed to the dead Emperor, and Aurelian was deified upon the spot; but in the matter of the second request, the prudent senator knew that to yield to it would be dangerous for the man whom the Senate should choose, perhaps even for the Senate itself, since the soldiers would not long maintain this attitude of repentance and humility. The choice was therefore sent back again to the army; but the latter persisted in its determination,—a way of commanding under a new form.

A few patriotic generals—to whom, moreover, the number of imperial deaths in so few years made it evident that the purple was likely to change quickly into a shroud—had been the determining agents in this conduct of the army, and now made the soldiery persevere in it. The senators were even less covetous of this perilous honor. Tacitus, the one among them who was most likely to be chosen, by reason of his name, his honors, and his fortune,² had taken shelter, after the session of the Senate, in one of his villas in Campania. The consul's order convoking the assembly for the 25th of September drew him reluctantly thence. In his address the consul Gordianus spoke with some discreet doubt of the persevering moderation of the soldiers. "Let us give a leader to the armies," he said; and he prudently added: "Either they will accept him whom you have chosen, or they will name another." He then called attention to the Barbaric nations, which lay around the Empire, making new efforts to break into it.—Persia, so lately threatened by Aurelian, perhaps meditating an attack, while the Syrians, a fickle race, were ready to guide her squadrons across the provinces; the Egyptian and Illyrian frontiers endangered; the Rhine crossed by the

¹ Upon coins and inscriptions he is called M. Claudius Tacitus.

² It seems impossible to accept the statement in the *Augustan History* with respect to the fortune of Tacitus, *quod habuit in redditibus, sestertium his milies octingentis* (*Tac.* 10); but we are not able to substitute another. It is certain, from what afterwards occurred, that this fortune was immense.

Franks, and once flourishing Gallic cities now in ashes. "We need an emperor," he exclaimed; and turning to Tacitus, with all the other senators, he added: "It is you whom we require." Vainly did the old man of seventy-five plead his age, his enfeebled health, and his pacific tastes. "You need a soldier," he said; "and you choose me, who am hardly able to fill the peaceful office of senator. The very unanimity of your choice will be fatal to me." But the senators would not listen to him; acclamations, twenty or thirty times repeated, hailed him Emperor; and the report of this session of the Senate, which to some seemed to open a new era, was written, according to custom, on an ivory tablet, which the new Augustus signed, his soul filled with sad presentiments.¹

No doubt it was an error to give the Empire a chief like this; and since, as a result of the decree of Gallienus,² there could be found in the Senate no bold soldier, it would have been the proper course to seek one in the armies. Probus, Carus, Diocletian, had none of them been concerned at all in the murder of Aurelian, and the army would have been grateful to have its momentary disinterestedness applauded, without such action on the part of the Senate as must have caused the soldiery immediately to repent of their late conduct. The choice of an eminent soldier at this time made by the Senate would have been to seal, at least for the moment, a reconciliation between the civil and the military orders. But living, as they did, remote from public affairs, in their idle grandeur and their gilded servitude, the senators had lost their grasp of the actual world, and no man reminded them of the day—which many among them had seen, however—when the soldiers dragged to the Gemoniae Maximus and Balbinus, and shouted: "These are the Senate's Emperors!" At first rendered anxious and uneasy by the political duties which fell to them again, they had ended by resuming their old illusions, and abandoned themselves to the puerile delight of again grasping a power which they were incapable of retaining.

The senator next in rank to Tacitus, Falconius Nicomachus, reminded the Senate of the woes that Rome had suffered under too

¹ Vopiscus (*Tac.* 5) read this report in the Ulpian library.

² See p. 239.

youthful rulers,—which was at once a truth and a flattery; then addressing himself to Tacitus, whose sons were only boys, Falconius besought him, if the fates should soon snatch him from the state, to choose a successor, not from his own family, but from outside, “for the reason that it would not be right to dispose of the Empire as of a private estate.” Falconius meant to imply that the electoral power should remain with the Senate; and the general opinion was with him. Loud cries of assent were heard from all parts of the curia.

The Conscript Fathers were enraptured at the turn events had taken. In the excess of his joy and of his hopes, one of them wrote to a less enthusiastic colleague: “Lay aside your indolence; come forth from your retreat at Baiae or Puteoli. Give yourself back to the city, the Senate. Rome flourishes, and with Rome the whole state. Let us give a thousand thanks to the army, which is a truly Roman army. Our just authority, that object of all our desires, is at last re-established. We receive appeals, we appoint emperors, we make kings. Can we not also unmake them? You understand me without further speech: to the wise, a word is enough.”² This word was repeated by all the writer’s colleagues. “I shall rule with and through you.” Tacitus had said. When he asked the consulship for his brother Florianus, it was objected that the list was full; and he contented himself with replying: “The Senate knows well the Emperor it has made.” Notwithstanding his new title, the feeble old man was really to the Senate only its first member, and it was said openly that the true ruler was now the Senate itself.³

Official letters made known this restoration of the Roman Republic to the chief cities of the Empire,—Milan, Aquileia, Athens, Corinth, Thessalonica, Antioch, Alexandria, Carthage, and Trèves. Two of these we have; the following is the one addressed to the capital of Roman Africa:—

¹ Bronze medallion.

² Vopiscus, *Tac.* 6 and 7; *Flor.* 6.

³ . . . *Ipsum senatum principem factum* (Vopiscus, *Tac.* 12).



THE EMPEROR TACITUS,
LAURELLED.¹

"The honorable Senate of Rome to the decurions of Carthage:

"Peace and happiness, security and prosperity, to the Republic and to the Roman world.

"We have recovered the right of conferring the imperial authority of appointing the ruler, the Augustus; it is to us, therefore, that you will submit affairs of importance. Appeals from proconsular decisions and from all the tribunals of the Empire will be laid before the urban prefect. Your own authority is restored to its former condition, since in recovering its own rights the first body of the Republic protects the rights of others." And men clothed themselves in holiday attire, and sacrificed white victims to thank the gods for the return of the ancient liberty;¹ medals were struck whereon it was promised to this Emperor, who already had one foot in the grave, that in due time the *decennalia*² should be celebrated for him. Alas! the election of Tacitus, these ostentatious messages and these vain promises, were the last political act of the Roman Republic.

The praetorians, the people, and the armies accepted the Emperor chosen by those who had in earlier days been the masters of Rome,³ and the inhabitants of the Empire swore fidelity to him. All things seemed to go well. But the Alani, seeing the Empire without a leader and defenceless, had invaded Asia Minor, whither the Goths, encamped in the vicinity of the Palus Maeotis, followed them. Tacitus was obliged to journey in haste to the scene of action. In Thrace he presented himself before Aurelian's army, which must have been astonished to see this feeble old man in the place where they had seen so long the martial figure of the iron-handed hero. Accordingly, the praetorian prefect essayed by humble words to prevent discontent. "Most virtuous comrades,"⁴ he said, "you have asked the Senate to give you an Emperor; the very illustrious assembly has obeyed your will and command. It is not fitting for me to say more in the presence of the Emperor who will watch over us. Listen to him with the respect that he merits." Tacitus in his turn was extremely

¹ . . . *Antiquitatem sibi redditam* (Vopiscus, *Flor.* 6).

² Eckhel, vii. 498.

³ In addressing the praetorians, Tacitus said *sanctissimi milites*, and in speaking to the plebeians he called them *surratissimi Quirites*. Oriental bombast extended to all men. Modern Italy has preserved something of it to this day.

⁴ *Sanctissimi commitentes* (Vopiscus, *Tac.* 8).

modest; he feigned to consider himself the choice of the soldiers, and spoke in fitting terms on the subject of his age: it did not permit him, he said, to imitate the great exploits of his predecessors, but would inspire him with wise counsels. “Trajan also was an old man when he came to the Empire, and was called to it by the choice of one individual. Now it is by you first, most virtuous comrades, by you who know how to judge the worth of a ruler, and in the second place by the Senate, that I have been esteemed worthy of this title.” It was imprudent to evoke in the midst of these troops the grand figure of the conqueror of the Dacians, the Germans, and the Parthian Empire; but the liberal *donativum*, which Tacitus paid with his own money, made the address seem eloquent.

The Barbarians made pretence that they had been summoned by the late Emperor as auxiliaries to give help against Persia. Not receiving the pay promised for an expedition which had not been made, they indemnified themselves by the pillage of Pontus, Galatia, and Cappadocia. Bold predatory bands penetrated even into Cilicia before Aurelian had been many months dead. What incessant vigilance was needful to keep in check those innumerable freebooters who prowled around the Empire, and, under Gallienus, had become familiar with all its roads! Tacitus negotiated; he paid and sent home some of these Barbarians: others fell under the swords of his soldiers. But the latter were already becoming weary of obedience; they murdered one of the Emperor’s kindred whom Tacitus had intrusted with the government of Syria, and after that, to escape punishment, the Emperor himself. A six months’ reign, and a colossal fortune dissipated in gifts to the soldiery or abandoned to the state,¹ were what the Senate’s election had procured for Tacitus and his family.

He was a man of upright character and religious mind; never did he omit to have served in his house the meat of the sacrifices,—a sort of communion with the god to whom the sacrifice had been offered. He punished some of the murderers of his predecessor, and it cannot be denied that his intentions were of the best. His biographer attributes to him many statutes: but statutes are easily made, and he had neither the ability nor the time to bring out good results

¹ *Patrimonium suum publicavit* (Vopiscus, *Tac.* 10).

to the state. For one act, however, we owe him special gratitude,—he caused the works of Tacitus to be placed in all the public libraries, and ordered ten copies of them to be made every year. In multiplying thus the copies of the *Annals* and the *Histories* he increased the chance of their preservation; and while we cannot say that the single manuscript which has saved this great writer's work is derived from one of these, it is at least possible that without them we should have lost the tragic history of the Caesars.¹

BRONZE MEDALLION.²

Tacitus had appointed as praetorian prefect his brother, M. Annius Florianus, and the latter

now obtained the purple from his soldiers, who were themselves desirous not to leave the Senate time again to appoint an Emperor. But the army of the East had at this time as general a brave soldier whose services had always been greater than his honors. At the news that Tacitus was dead, the troops of Probus proclaimed their general Emperor, and those of Florianus rid themselves at Tarsus of him whom they had chosen (July, 276). He had reigned three months. Upon their estate near Interamna was raised to the two brothers a cenotaph and statues thirty feet high. Doubtless to console their descendants, whom these nine months of the imperial dignity had deprived of the heads of their family and reduced to indigence, some friend of the Senate put in circulation this prophecy, which Vopiscus hands down to us: “A thousand years hence a mighty prince of the blood of Tacitus, after a glorious reign, will give back to the Conspect Fathers their authority, and, a true son of early Rome, will live submissive to the good old customs of the country.” “I do not anticipate,” says Vopiscus modestly, “that my book will live long enough for men to read this prediction

BRONZE MEDALLION.³

¹ Two mediaeval MSS. are the sole authorities for the text of his works, each containing a portion only; and they do not duplicate each other, so that we depend on one MS. for all that we have.

² M. ANN[ius] FLORIANVS, crowned with laurel.

³ The Emperor Probus, laurelled, with pike and buckler.

at the time when it will either be seen to be fulfilled or will take its place among fables." Vopiscus was mistaken: his book has lived much longer than a thousand years, although without greatly deserving to do so; but the avenger of the Senate has never appeared.¹

II.—PROBUS (JULY, 276, TO SEPTEMBER OR OCTOBER, 282).

THE reigns of Tacitus and Florianus had been only a continuation of the interregnum. The real successor of Aurelian was one of his compatriots and his bravest comrade in arms, M. Aurelius Probus.² We already know him; two letters of Valerian, drawn from the imperial archives, show in what esteem he was held by this Emperor, one of whose relatives Probus had with his own hand rescued from the Quadi: "In accordance with the opinion I have always had of young Probus, and the testimony of the most honorable citizens, who call him the man of his name, I have appointed him tribune, contrary to the ordinance of the divine Hadrian,⁴ and have intrusted to him six cohorts of Saracens, the Gallie auxiliaries, and the Persian cavalry brought to us by the Syrian Artavasdes." Aurelian and Tacitus had had like confidence in him. The former wrote to him: "To show you how greatly I value your merits, I intrust to you my Tenth legion, which I myself received from Claudio. By a sort of happy accident this corps has always had future Emperors for leaders;" and the latter: "The Senate has appointed me Emperor; but know this, that the greater part of the burden



COIN OF PROBUS.³

¹ I have followed the rendering some have given to the words *talis historia*, but without certainty whether it be not to the prediction itself that they apply rather than to the book of Vopiscus. It is, however, unimportant.

² Probus was born at Sirmium (Vopiscus, *Prob.* 3). Aurelius Victor (*Ep.* 37) makes him a Dalmatian. His father was a centurion, and later a tribune. One of his coins bears the words *Origini Avg.*, with the she-wolf, *Lupa genitrix lactans*: whence it may be inferred that he claimed to be of Roman origin (Eckhel, vii. 505).

³ Reverse of a coin of Probus, of the type of the she-wolf coins, and bearing the legend: **ORIGINI AVG.** (Small bronze.)

⁴ The one which prohibited the anointment of too youthful tribunes (*sine barba*). Some sentences from the two letters of Valerian are here put together (Vopiscus, *Prob.* 4). The second contains the enumeration, always curious and significant, of the articles furnished See p. 190, note 2.

will rest upon your shoulders. We all know your worth. Aid us then in our times of need. I have given you the command of the army in the East,¹ I have increased your emoluments five-fold,² doubled your military decorations, and you will share with me the consulship of the coming year."

Probus did not desire the Empire. "You make a mistake," he said to the soldiers who saluted him, "for I shall never flatter you." He said the same to the praetorian prefect of Florianus, whom he did not remove from office. "I did not wish for this title, and it is contrary to my desire that it is given me. But I am not at liberty to refuse the burden which the army lays upon me: it is now a question of fulfilling my duty well." He was in the prime of life, forty-four years of age, and to his military abilities he joined uncommon good sense, which preserved him from being dazzled at his elevation. What took place upon the death of Aurelian shows that a reaction against military saturnalia had begun in the minds even of the generals.³ Probus was one of those who felt most keenly the necessity of raising the civil order, humiliated since the time of Caracalla by the arrogance of the soldiery. This appears from his letter, in which, while notifying the Senate of his accession, he seems to await from it the conferring of authority. "When you made choice of one of your own number, Conscrip Fathers," he wrote, "to succeed the Emperor Aurelian, you acted in conformity with your usual rectitude and wisdom; for you are the lawful rulers of the world, and the authority which you hold from your ancestors you will transmit to your posterity. Would to the gods that Florianus, instead of seizing upon his brother's purple as an inheritance, had waited until your sovereign will had decided either in his favor or for some one else! The legions have done well to punish him for his rashness; they have offered me the title of Augustus, but I submit to your clemency my claims and my services."

¹ *Decreto totius Orientis ducatu* (Vopiseus, *Prob.* 7).

² *Salarium.* According to a letter of Valerian (*id., Prob.* 4), the *salarium* would include all the material advantages attached to the grade, and probably also the pay.

³ It is perhaps another sign of this same reaction in men's minds that the name of Marcus Aurelius had been borne by most of the Emperors after Claudius Gothicus. Notwithstanding his wars, Marcus Aurelius was eminently the representative of civil order.

This letter does honor to the statecraft of this soldier. He knew the Senate's weakness, and was perfectly aware that he had nothing to fear from it; but this decrepit body had still the grandeur of ancient memories, and Probus deemed it wise to restore, before the eyes of the soldiery, some splendor to this overclouded majesty, that they might see that outside of them and above them there existed, if not a power, at least a right.

It is needless to say with what acclamations the senators welcomed this letter. Probus was likened to Alexander and to Trajan; he was accredited with all the virtues of the Antonines and all the talents of Claudius and Aurelian, and he merited these eulogies. What joy again when a second message announced that the Senate was to receive appeals, to appoint pro-consuls and their legates, and finally (which was a more important thing), that it was to confirm the imperial ordinances! This the Conscript Fathers had never gone so far as to claim. Probus granted them more than they themselves had sought to take upon Aurelian's death; and the senatorial restoration seemed complete. In reality no change at all was made. The Emperor employed towards the venerable assembly gentle words instead of an air of displeasure; the Fathers no longer trembled; they seemed more active in their curule chairs, and they praised in good faith the unselfishness of the new Emperor. Probus asked nothing more than this, and he did not feel that with a few acts of deference he paid too dearly for this good under-

PROBUS.¹

¹ Marble bust, Museum of Naples, No. 32 of the Catalogue.

standing. The reality of power remained where the public weal demanded that it should be,—in his hands; and we shall see that he used it well.

Upon the death of Aurelian the Barbarians had fallen upon Gaul and had devastated many Gallic cities.¹ Probus went thither with a large army. While his generals were driving back the Franks into the marshes of Batavia and Frisia, he himself drove the Alemanni across the Rhine, pursued them into the valley of the Neckar and over the slopes of the Suabian Alps, taking from them their booty and the captives whom they were carrying away. In the hope of closing the road against new incursions, he repaired the line of defence which protected the Decumatian lands from Ratisbon to Mayence; that is to say, from the Danube to the Rhine.² Like Marius and Hadrian, he believed that to keep the soldiers busy was the best means of preserving discipline; he therefore caused them to construct or repair a stone wall having large towers at regular intervals,—an excellent precaution if there were always a strong army behind this rampart, ready to repulse any assailants who might attempt to break through it, but a useless measure when the Empire, assailed on all sides, was able to leave there only detachments

too feeble to guard this immense line.⁴ The wall, in fact, crum-

¹ Vopiscus, *Prob.*: in chap. xv. it is said seventy; in chap. xiii., sixty. Vopiscus adds that Probus destroyed four hundred thousand Barbarians; I am disposed to read *quadragesima* instead of *quadringentis*. These four hundred thousand men killed would suppose a more formidable invasion than that of the Goths in the time of Claudius II., and nothing indicates that this was so.

² On the subject of these works, see Vol. V. p. 190, and the map on p. 185.

³ Column commemorative of the victories of Probus over the Alemanni (?), found at Merten, near Metz (restoration from the *Revue archéol.*).

⁴ At the present day the republic of Buenos Ayres adopts the same method of defence



TRIUMPHAL COLUMN.³

bled under the feet of the invaders, like Hadrian's wall in Britain before the advancing Picts. But as late as the Middle Ages the Suabian peasant, building his hovel with the stones taken from these ruins, marvelled at the grandeur of the work, crossing valleys and passing over hill-tops; he attributed its construction to demons, and it has always been called the Devil's Wall.

These gigantic works, and the presence of the Emperor and his army, intimidated the Barbarians; nine tribes sought for peace, and gave hostages and corn, cattle and horses, their sole wealth. Probus received into pay sixteen thousand of their warriors, whom he scattered through his legions in small bands, so that they might be a power and not a danger; and he expressed this in words: "It is well to feel them, but not to see them" (277). Thus the Empire, on the side of the Rhine, again assumed a vigorous defensive.

The following year Probus visited Rhaetia, Illyricum, and Moesia, where the Alemanni, the Burgundians, the Vandals, the Sarmatians, and the Goths had reappeared; he drove out these unimportant bands, and once more restored security to these countries, where for the last forty years life had been so perilous. On the middle or lower Danube he encountered a German nation, the Lygians, whom Tacitus represents as having a frightful aspect, which in the hand-to-hand encounters of ancient war might well intimidate the adversary. "They blacken their shields, their bodies, their faces, and choose the darkest night to make their attack. The surprise, the horror produced by darkness, the mere aspect of this terrific host, which seems to have emerged from the infernal regions, chill with fear the bravest heart: for in battle it is always the eyes which are conquered first."¹ These black warriors did not, however, prevail against Roman discipline. From the time of this collision their name disappears from history, as if the nation itself had been utterly destroyed. Probus had promised his soldiers a piece of gold for each head of an enemy brought to him. In the case of the prisoners taken from all these barbarous tribes, he gave them lands in Britain, where they proved faithful to the master

against the Indians of the pampas: and China has done the same for centuries with her great wall. These lines of defence do not always prevent incursions, but they embarrass the invaders' return.

¹ Tac., *Germania*, 43.

who would have been able to punish them with severity in case of disobedience.

After having tranquillized Thrace, long harassed by the barbarous tribes of this country, whom Graeco-Roman civilization had not yet been able to transform into peaceful laborers, he passed over into Asia Minor (279), and put an end to the exploits of Palfurius, a famous brigand, and especially to those of the Isaurians, inveterate freebooters, who pillaged by land and sea, and who up to this time had never been subjugated. Probus organized an expedition against them, penetrated into their mountains, searched through all their valleys, and when he withdrew left behind him a force of veterans.¹ These soldiers he established in the principal haunt of the bandits, and distributed lands among

them, with the condition that their sons, on attaining the age of eighteen, should serve in the legions. This was like instituting military fiefs. He probably imposed similar conditions on the captives whom he had transported into Britain. Severus had set an example of this tenure of land, and the usage was destined to increase.



COIN OF BAHRAM OR VARANES II.²

In Syria, Probus received a Persian embassy. Bahram II., who had reigned since 275, had had time to learn the value of the legions led by a brave and able general. He begged for the friendship of Probus, and sent him presents, which the Emperor scornfully refused. "I am surprised," Probus said, "that you send me so little, when all that you have will one day belong to me. Keep it until it suits my convenience to come and take it." This was bluster, but it was suited to the Oriental taste; and the condition of the Roman fortresses in Mesopotamia, together with the menacing³ preparations which were going forward, decided Bahram not to resent this insolence,— and it even appears that a treaty was concluded between the two empires.⁴

¹ Zosimus, i. 69–70. This author relates at length the desperate resistance made by Lydios, one of the Isaurian chiefs, at Cremina, in Pisidia.

² Heads of Varanes or Bahram II. and the queen, with the legend: The worshipper of Ormuzd, the excellent Varanes, king of the kings of Iran and Turan, germ of the gods. The reverse bears: The divine Varanes, and a pyre between two figures. (Silver coin.)

³ A coin of Probus bears on the reverse: *Exercitus Persicus* (Eckhel, vii. 504).

⁴ *Facta pace cum Persis* (Vopiscus, *Prob.* 18).

Did the Emperor then proceed into Egypt, or did he send one of his lieutenants to call to account Coptos, Ptolemais, and the Blennmyes for assistance rendered some years before to Firmus? This we do not know: but Rome shortly beheld in her streets negro captives who had been taken on the borders of Ethiopia.

Probus had now completed, as Aurelian, Severus, and Hadrian had done, the review of the frontiers,—those of Africa excepted, where all was tranquil. This had become a periodical necessity, since the Barbaric world was astir, and always ready to attack the provinces.

The Emperor was recalled into Thrace to effect an important work. The invasions and battles which for half a century had been incessant along the whole line of the Danube had made many parts of these provinces desolate. Probus resolved to call the Barbarians into this portion of the Empire and give them lands, cattle, and farming implements. He had already transported Lygians and Vandals into Britain, and had advised the Alemanni to settle in the Decumatian lands. The hostility of the Goths of Dacia towards the Bastarnae, who occupied the eastern Carpathians, gave him the occasion to bring into the Empire this latter tribe, the remnant of that great mass of Gallic nations whom we have seen, in the time of Alexander and Perseus, established in the valley of the Danube.

A hundred thousand Bastarnae, with their wives and children, came down into Thrace, where, happy at escaping from their enemies, they adapted themselves readily to this new life. Rome rejoiced. “For us the Barbarians labor,” it was said; “for us they sow.”¹ The same attempt was made in the case of the Gepidae, the Guthunges (Goths), and the Frankish prisoners. It was a dangerous system: thus to fill the frontier provinces with foreign elements was equivalent to making the Barbarians the warders at the gates of the Empire. This peaceful invasion, which the Emperor himself organized, far from hindering the other, which was made with violence a century later, facilitated it. Ancient Rome had had a different policy: she Latinized conquered regions; Probus Germanized Roman provinces.²

These Barbarians established in the provinces did not always

¹ *Barbari vobis arant, vobis serunt* (*Vopiscus, Prob.* 15).

² See, pp. 188 *et seqq.*, the paragraph relative to the army.

quietly accept their exile. The Gepidae and the Guthunges desired to continue in Thrace their nomadic life; they ranged through the cultivated lands, and committed such ravages that it became necessary to kill a great number, and adopt rigorous measures against the rest. The Franks did more. Relegated to the lands about the Euxine, they seized some vessels, says Zosimus,¹ crossed the Bosphorus, and having ravaged along their way the coasts of Asia Minor and Greece, and pillaged Athens, Syracuse, and Carthage, they passed through the Straits of Hercules, coasting Spain and Gaul, and came back to the mouths of the Rhine, where they related to their amazed fellow-countrymen how they had with impunity traversed the whole of the great Empire. This was a fatal revelation, too well understood by the Frisians and Saxons, who began about that time to ravage with their piracies the coasts of the Western provinces. Other dangers were to be feared from the Barbarians destined for the games of the circus. These men who were so ready to shed their blood did not take kindly to the trade of amusing the populace. Probus had reserved a large number of them for the shows which he was to furnish to the city after his victories; but they broke their chains, and some hard fighting was necessary before they were subdued.

About this time the turbulent population of Alexandria proclaimed as emperor Saturninus, an able general, valued by Aurelian and Probus, but of volatile mind and restless disposition,—like that Gallic race, says the historian, whence he sprang.² At first he yielded to the popular whim; but later, seized with fear, he fled into Palestine to escape the dangerous honor offered him; finally, however, believing that there was no longer safety for him in a private station, he took off a purple veil from a statue of Venus and made himself an imperial mantle of it. But he said, weeping, to the soldiers who dragged him to this honor: "Alas, how useful a citizen is lost to the state! I have restored the Gallic provinces, I have taken Africa from the Moors, and I have pacified Spain. To what profit is it all? In one day I lose all that I had gained. In calling me to the imperial power you

¹ i. 71.

² . . . *Oriundo fuit Gallus, ex gente hominum inquietissima et avida semper vel faciendi principis vel imperii* (Vopiscus, *Saturn.* 7). Zosimus and Zonaras consider him a Moor.

sentence me to death." Probus attempted to spare him, addressing to him friendly letters, with promises of pardon; but the soldiers, who hoped to profit by his promotion, compelled him to persevere in his usurpation. On the arrival of the imperial troops he sought shelter in a fortress, but was captured and put to death.

At Lyons a similar occurrence took place. Ever since the armies, under the strong hand of their new leaders, had resumed obedience, the populace of the great cities had seemed to inherit the former's turbulence. The Lyonnese proclaimed Proculus,—a rude soldier whom Probus had but to touch with his finger to overthrow. Bonosus, another veteran, revolted to escape the responsibility of a misdemeanor: he had suffered the Germans to burn the Roman flotilla on the Rhine, of which he had been left in charge. Defeated by the imperial troops, aided by German auxiliaries, he attached a rope to a tree, and hung himself. His body was an object of derision. "This is not a man hanging here," it was said, "but only a skin of wine;"¹ and the reproach was merited. Probus had spared the family of Proculus, and he did the same in the case of Bonosus, granting to Hunila, his wife, a pension for life.

Again, a revolt broke out in Britain. A friend of the Emperor had persuaded him to give the government of this province to some individual whose name has not been preserved; learning that the fidelity of his *protégé* was wavering, and fearing to be regarded as his accomplice, the Emperor's friend feigned to have fallen into disgrace at court, exiled himself into Britain, and being cordially welcomed by the governor, assassinated him.

All these attempts had failed miserably: none the less, however, were they a dangerous symptom. The bad instincts, which had for a moment given way before a feeling of the public disasters, were re-awakening. Probus owed his elevation to war; notwithstanding this, he greatly preferred to be occupied only with works of public utility, and condemned his soldiers to this. The troops were not unwilling to be employed in repairing military roads and rebuilding dilapidated fortifications, as their predecessors had so often done; but Probus would have them construct temples and porticos, regulate the course of rivers and drain marshes, break

¹ Vopiscus, *Bonos.* 15. He was a Breton of Spanish origin, and his mother a Gaul. His father had been a schoolmaster. In respect to his habits of intoxication, see above, p. 196.

up the ground and plant the vine in Gaul, Pannonia, and Moesia, where these vineyards, longer of life than the Empire, still exist; and there was current a dangerous saying of his: "The day will come when Rome will no longer need an army." Our sympathy is due to this gallant soldier who did not underrate the share of the civil authority in an established community, who in the midst of arms was mindful of the labors of peace, and employed his legions therein while maintaining among them severe discipline. He was yet in the prime of life,¹ beloved of the Senate, feared by the Barbarians, and had he lived would have secured prosperous days to the Empire; but he was not suffered to live. The Roman army was composed of too rough material for ideas of devotion to the public weal taking any other form than that of courage in battle to be comprehensible to these men, who were in no respect Romans. One summer day, in a torrid heat which rendered fatigue greater than usual, and men's minds more excitable, the soldiers employed in draining a marsh in the neighborhood of Sirmium threw down their implements, seized their swords, and forcing an entrance into a tower where Probus was overlooking the work, they murdered him² (September or October, 282). The deed being done, they wept over the man whom they had just killed, and upon his tomb were inscribed these words: "Here lies the Emperor Probus, a truly upright man, who conquered all barbarous nations and all tyrants."³ Carus, whom he had loaded with honors, avenged his death upon the murderers.

We may add one title more to those which Aurelian and Probus

¹ Fifty years of age (Orelli, No. 1,104).

² This tower was protected with iron (*turris ferrata*), whence it may be inferred that murmurs had already been heard, and that Probus guarded himself against a surprise. Zonaras represents this murder as preceeded by a revolt of other troops, who had constrained Carus to assume the purple and march upon Italy. Cf. Vopiseus, *Proh.* 21; Aur. Victor, 37; Eutropius, ix. 17; Orosius, vii. 24; the Syncellus, etc. The authority of none of these writers being great, I adopt that version of the story which seems to me most probable.

³ The coins of Probus have for their legend: *Bono imp. C. Probo*, — an epithet rare upon imperial coins. An inscription (Wilmanns, No. 1,048) bears the following: *Pietate justitia fortitudine et plane omnium rictum principi vero Gothicō veroque Germanico ac victoriarum omnium nominibus industri, M. Aur. Probo*. Mommsen concludes from the words *vero Gothicō veroque Germanico* that Probus had refused these two titles. It seems to me that the general character of the inscription gives another meaning to these words. The people of Valentia, in engraving these words, wish to contrast the important victories of Probus over the Goths and Germans with the pretended successes of so many other Emperors who were anything but real conquerors.

possess to the esteem of history: these valiant Emperors created the great military school whence emerged Carus, Diocletian and his three colleagues, Constantine, Licinius, and the generals who for more than a half century protected the frontiers from invasion.

III.—CARUS (SEPTEMBER, 282, TO DECEMBER, 283); CARINUS AND NUMERIANUS (DECEMBER, 283, TO APRIL, 285).

M. AURELIUS CARUS also was an Illyrian;¹ but he had been brought up in the capital, he called himself a Roman, and had filled military and civil offices, having been proconsul of Cilicia, consul *suffectus*, and praetorian prefect. He was therefore a senator; but he had less consideration for the Senate than had Probus, and contented himself with announcing to the Conspect Fathers his accession, and congratulating them that the Emperor was this time one of their own order.

He had two sons, of very different characters and tastes,—Carinus, violent and profligate; and Numerianus, of gentle manners and cultivated mind. If we may believe the flatteries of the Senate, who caused a statue to be erected to him in the Ulpian library,³ the latter was a great orator, and his verses were compared with those of the most famous poet of his time, Nemesianus. The new Emperor appointed his two sons Caesars, and, sharing the Empire with Carinus, gave him—perhaps not without hesitation—the government of the Western provinces. It is at least asserted that the Emperor soon repented of this act, and sought to withdraw the authority from his son in order to bestow it upon Constantius Chlorus.⁴ He himself, resuming the project formed by Probus of striking a heavy blow at Persia, the hereditary enemy, directed his steps towards the East, at

COIN OF CARUS.²

¹ At least he was born in Illyria; one of the chroniclers represents him as the son of a Carthaginian, *Poenis parentibus* (Vopiscus, *Carus*, 4); Zonaras calls him a Gaul.

² DEO ET DOMINO CARO INVIC. AVG. Radiate busts; the Sun and Carus facing each other. (Small bronze.)

³ This statue bore the following inscription: *Numeriano Caesari oratori temporibus suis potentissimo* (Vopiscus, *Num.* 12).

⁴ Vopiscus, *Carin.* 16.

the head of a formidable army; his second son accompanied him (January, 283).



CARUS, CROWNED WITH LAUREL.²

the storm. When the envoys arrived in the camp they were conducted into the presence of an old man, who, seated on the ground and clad in a simple woollen tunic, was eating some peas cooked with a little salt meat. This old man said to them that he was the Emperor, and that if the Persians did not acknowledge the majesty of Rome he would make their country as bare as his head; upon which, removing his cap, he showed it

At the news of the death of Probus the Quadi had crossed the Danube and overrun the whole of Pannonia.¹ Carus killed sixteen thousand of them, and took a large number of prisoners, among them many women.

He then advanced with rapid marches into Mesopotamia. Bahram II., whose principal army was at that time employed at the opposite extremity of his kingdom, essayed by a humble embassy to avert



COIN COMMEMORATIVE OF VICTORIES OVER THE QUADI.³

¹ Eutropius (ix. 6) places the Quadi in the eastern Carpathians; but this must be an error, for we have always found them in the vicinity of the Marcomanni.

² Intaglio of the *Cabinet de France* (nicolo, 14 millim. by 12), No. 2,106 of the Catalogue; not a likeness: Carus was older and bald, if the words attributed to him are authentic.

³ IMP. NVMERIANVS P. F. AVG. Laureled bust holding a spear and a globe. On the reverse: TRIVNF. VQVADOR; Carinus and Numerianus in a quadriga. (Bronze medallion, Cohen, No. 19.) But neither the father nor the younger son ever returned to Rome, and of this triumph, all that was seen were the coins which bore its emblems (Eckhel. vii. 512).

to them perfectly bald. "Are you hungry?" he then said. "If you are, eat from this dish; otherwise, you may go."¹ A victory gave him the road to Seleucia, and he entered that region without difficulty; he crossed the Tigris, took Ctesiphon, and was making ready to execute his threats, when one day during a storm his tent was seen to be in flames. Aper, his praetorian prefect, declared it to have been set on fire by a flash of lightning, which had also killed the Emperor. The lightning was probably not the real culprit. Carus was a hard master, and his soldiers and officers, fatigued by this summer campaign under a burning sun, saw themselves with alarm dragged away by him into the heart of Asia. A prophecy was put in circulation that no Roman Emperor could go beyond Ctesiphon, and some one took advantage of the storm to strike the blow. The oracle was fulfilled, and the flames concealed all traces of the crime (end of December, 283). The Emperor's secretary wrote to the urban prefect: "Our beloved Emperor Carus was ill in his bed when a furious storm burst over the camp. The sky became so darkened that we could not see each other's faces, and in the general confusion incessant peals of thunder prevented our being aware of what was going on. Immediately after a very heavy burst of thunder the outcry was raised that the Emperor was dead. It appeared that in the transports of their grief the household officers had set on fire the imperial tent, whence has arisen a report that the Emperor had been killed by lightning; but, so far as we have been able to investigate the matter, we believe that his death was caused by the illness from which he was suffering."²

Numerianus inherited the title of Augustus, which his brother Carinus also assumed at Rome; and the army, abandoning its con-

¹ These words have been also attributed to Probus.

² Intaglio of the *Cabinet de France* (sardonyx of 15 millim. by 11), No. 1,357 of the Catalogue. Under No. 1,359 the same collection possesses an intaglio cut on both sides; the reverse of the head of Bahram II. is a lion surmounted by a scorpion.

³ Vopiscus, *Car.* 8.



BAHRAM II. (VARANES).²

quests, fell back into the provinces. The young Emperor, a man of gentle and contemplative nature, preferred to dream over his verses rather than to add new exploits to those achieved by his father. His constitution was delicate; he had not been able to

M. AUR. CARINUS.¹

endure the fatigues of this expedition, and the sun and the burning sands of the desert had brought on an affection of the eyes which made it necessary for him to live in darkness. He was always either in his tent or in his litter, and the soldiers became accustomed to not seeing him. Thus slowly the army crossed Mesopotamia, the Syrian provinces, and Asia Minor. The prae-

¹ Bust of the Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 79.

torian prefect, Aper, father-in-law of Numerianus, was in command. At the beginning of September they reached the shores of the Bosporus. A part of the army had already crossed the straits when a rumor was put in circulation that Numerianus was dead. The soldiers rushed to the Emperor's tent, and found there a dead body, from which life had departed some days before. This secret, kept so long, directed suspicion upon the man whose duty it was to reveal it instantly; the soldiers surrounded Aper, accused him of his son-in-law's murder, loaded him with chains, and the generals, assembled at Chalcedon, on the Asiatic side, formed themselves into a tribunal to judge the murderer whose crime no man doubted. Before the decision they chose one of their number as chief; he was the son of a freedman, and himself a soldier of fortune, the captain of the household troops,¹ Diocles by name, a man who must have been an honored soldier, since without canvassing or the intervention of the soldiery he was the choice of his companions in arms. He ascends the tribunal, and swears by the Sun, the divinity who sees all things, even the secret thoughts of men, that he has in no way been concerned in the murder, nor has desired the imperial power; then, turning towards Aper, he exclaims, "This man is the assassin," and plunges his sword into the prefect's heart, as the priest immolates the victim devoted to the infernal gods. As supreme judge he had pronounced sentence; as soldier he executed it (Sept. 17, 284).

Diocletian is emperor; a new era is about to open; the history of Republican and Imperial Rome ends, and that of the Later Empire begins.

¹ *Domesticos regens* (*Id.*, *Numer.* 13). The *domestici*, who are mentioned as early as the time of Caracalla, were companies of the body-guard: their captains naturally took the rank and authority given them by the confidence of the Emperor, whose life was in their hands. An inscription found at Nicomedeia mentions a body-guard of protectors (*protectores divini lateris*) under Aurelian (*C. I. L.* iii. 327). Another mentions an officer of this guard who was consul in 261 (Perrot, *La Galatie*, etc., i. 6). In an inscription of the time of Claudius II. the *protectores* are mentioned (*Bull. épigr.* No. 1, p. 5).

CHAPTER XCIX.

DIOCLETIAN; WARS AND ADMINISTRATION.

I.—DIOCLETIAN AND MAXIMIAN; THE DYARCHY (284–293).

DIOCLES, who after his accession gave to his Greek name a Roman and more sonorous form, Diocletianus,¹ was a Dalmatian from the environs of Scutari, whose father had been a slave.

Entering the service at an early age, he attracted the notice of his superior officers less by brilliant achievements than by his acute and penetrating mind, which always found the wisest measure to adopt and the best means of carrying it into execution.² At the time of the death of Claudio Gothiscus, Diocletian was twenty-five years old,—an age well suited to profit by the lessons of the great military school of Aurelius



and Probus.³ In those stormy times advancement was rapid; he rose quickly to the higher grades in the army, was made consul *suffectus*, governor of Moesia, and commander of the palace-guard,—a post of confidence which gave him very high rank. To set in circulation the report that in taking the life of Aper he had executed a decree of Heaven, Diocletian related that a Druidess of Tongres, in Belgium, had promised him that he should be Emperor after he had killed a wild boar. “From that day,” he said, “I

¹ His name in inscriptions is C. (or M.) Aurelius Valerius Diocletianus (Wilmanns, Nos. 769 and 824). He was born in 245 at Doclea, in Dalmatia, near Podgoritz, below Montenegro, and was but thirty-nine at the time of his accession.

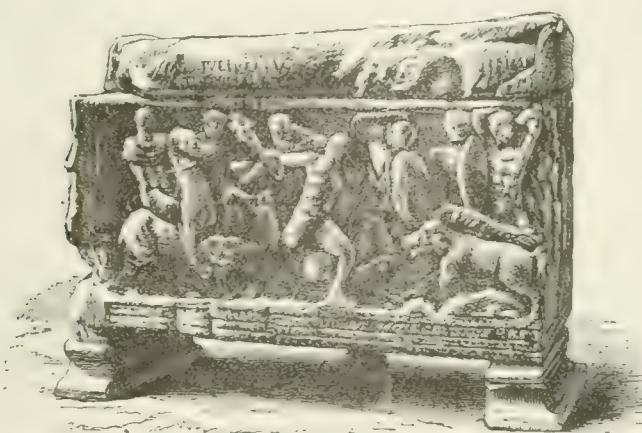
² Aur. Victor, who lived not long after Diocletian, filling high offices under Julian, says that the former was chosen *ob sapientiam*, and calls him *magnus vir* (*Cæs.* 39).

³ IMP. C[æsar] C[aius] VAL[erius] DIOCLETIANVS P[ius] F[elix] AVG[ustus]. Laureled bust, with cuirass and aegis. (Bronze medallion.)

⁴ . . . *Usumque bonae militiae quanta his Aurelianis Probiisque institutio fuit* (Aur. Victor, 39).

sought the wild boar everywhere, and I have killed many; but other men have eaten them." Aurelian, indeed, and then Probus, Tacitus, and Carus, successively ascended the throne, and still Diocletian remained in the ranks. On the 17th of September, 284, the designated wild boar¹ fell at last beneath his blows, and the son of the Dalmatian slave became Emperor of Rome.

The rare documents which we possess in relation to Diocletian do not give those inner details which permit us to understand the



CHASE OF THE WILD BOAR.²

true nature of the man. However, notwithstanding gaps and obscurities, it is clearly to be seen that he was something more than a soldier of fortune. But he did not come from one of those rich and intellectual communities in which the Antonines had acquired the elegant tastes and refined manners of the Roman world. Accordingly, not possessing their natural or acquired distinction as a means to keep the crowd at a distance, he surrounded himself with a cold and solemn ceremonial, regulated by the strictest etiquette. In the arts his taste inclined to the massive constructions, the heavy ornamentation of periods of natural decline; and

¹ *Aper* is the Latin word signifying "wild boar." It has been believed that by this precipitate murder Diocletian intended to prevent compromising revelations, since he, as commander of the body-guard, must have known what was taking place in the tent of Numerianus. But as father-in-law of the Emperor, as well as praetorian prefect, Aper had a superior authority, which would have permitted him to send away all persons who might have prevented the carrying out of his designs.

² Bas-relief from a sarcophagus found at Salona, the subject of which is regarded as an allusion to the murder of Aper.

while Hadrian's villa at Tivoli has preserved to us a great number of valuable works of art, from the palace of Diocletian at Salona—an enormous mass of marble, granite, and porphyry—none whatever have come down to us.

In respect to literature his taste would seem to have been better. We know that he gave to Nicomedeia a school of higher instruction, to which he called Lactantius, the most eloquent rhetorician of his time;¹ that he excused students, up to their twenty-fifth year, from municipal burdens;² that he took as his model the philosopher Marcus Aurelius,³—a greater man than himself, but not so great a ruler; that, finally, he caused biographies of the Emperors to be written.⁴ Unfortunately the lessons that he learned from history, although they revealed to him the points truly important for an administration, did not teach him gentleness. Throughout his reign he showed himself pitiless towards armed insurrections, and even towards those that were not armed; and while in his retirement he showed much practical philosophy, he appears never to have had a very lively interest in intellectual matters: at Salona his garden was far more attractive to him than were his books. His religion was that of the peasant,—for his infirmities, a healing deity, Aesculapius; for his fortunes, a protecting deity, Jupiter, and the voice of the oracles, listened to more attentively in certain cases than the utterance of human wisdom.

But Diocletian possessed the qualities which make the ruler,—a knowledge of men, a comprehension of the needs of the state, and the firm resolve to devote his thoughts and himself

¹ Lactan., *Div. Inst.* v. 2, and Saint Jerome, *De Vir. illustr.* 80: . . . *Arnobii discipulus, sub Diocletiano principe accitus cum Flavio grammatico.* Another writer, Hierocles, was vicar of the diocese of Bithynia.

² . . . *Ut studiis non avocantur* (*Code Just.* x. 49, 1). See in the reign of Valentinian I. an ordinance concerning the schools of Rome. Diocletian also said: *Artem geometriae discevere, atque exercere publice interest* (*Code Just.* ix. 14, 2).

³ *Augustan History, Marc. Ant.* 19. He blamed the savage temper of Maximian (*asperitatem*), and said of Aurelian that he was better suited to be a general than to be an Emperor (*Ibid., Aurel.* 43). Lactantius (*De morte pers.*) speaks of his moderation: . . . *Hanc moderationem tenere conatus est.*

⁴ A part of the *Augustan History*. Cf. Teuffel, *Geschichte der röm. Literatur*, No. 388. Capitolinus says to him (*In Macrino*, 15, *ad fin.*): . . . *Quae de plurimis collecta Serenitati Tuae . . . detulimus, quia te cupidum veterum imperatorum esse persperimus.* The saying of Diocletian, that the best of rulers is in danger of being sold by his courtiers, seems to have been borrowed from letters exchanged between Timesitheus and Gordian III. (*Hist. Aug., Gordianus III.* 24–25.)

to the cares of government. It might be thought that this creator of the Byzantine court was an effeminate person; on the contrary, he



GATE OF THE PALACE OF DIOCLETIAN, CALLED THE GOLDEN GATE, AT SALONA.

manifested, in respect to the provinces, the frontiers, and the armies, all the masculine energy of Hadrian. Like that indefatigable traveller, he was incessantly on the road throughout the Empire. He

weighed his plans carefully, determined them long in advance, in order to have time to secure their success, and executed with energy what he had prudently prepared. His bust in the Capitol shows plainly this patient tenacity. By the broad, square forehead,

the cold and tranquil face, we recognize a man master of himself,— which is the first condition for becoming master of others.

Lactantius accuses him of cowardice and of avarice,— strange reproaches to address to the soldier who had gained his promotions on fields of battle, and to the frugal ruler who was the most ostentatious of emperors only because he believed this ostentation necessary to the new monarchy he was founding. Neither do we agree with Lampridius when he calls Diocletian the “Father of the Golden Age;”² the fourth



AESCAULAPIUS.¹

century has no right to this title. The history of his reign, which with but a brief exception gave to the Roman world a long period of domestic peace, and to the Empire forty years of security, will make us know him better than the words of doubtful veracity spoken by his enemies or by his flatterers.

The man chosen by the army of the East had a dangerous com-

¹ Marble in the Museum at Naples.

² *Aug. Hist., Heliog.* 34.

petitor in Carinus, who, proud of a brilliant success over the Jazyges, had no idea of abandoning his paternal inheritance. But, detested by the Senate,¹—a matter, it is true, of but little importance,—Carinus was despised for his sensuality by the rough comrades in arms of the later Emperors, and dreaded by the soldiers on account of his cruelty; and this disaffection of the army was serious for an aspirant to the throne who had to encounter a competitor.

On both sides many months were employed in making ready for the struggle. Carinus first defeated Julian, governor of Venetia, who had assumed the purple; and he gained also some partial advantages over the advance-guard of Diocletian. In March or April, 285, the armies met for a decisive engagement at Margus, on the Morawa, not far from the confluence of that river with the Danube. As always, the Asiatic legions gave way before the onset of the legions of Europe; but Carinus was killed by one of his own officers whose wife he had outraged.³

His death seems to have been a deliverance for every one. On the conqueror's part there were no confiscations, no exiles; each man retained his office, even the urban and praetorian prefects, one of whom Diocletian took for his colleague in the consulship. It is probable an agreement had been entered into before the battle, and that the officers of the Western Emperor had sold him to his competitor. Eutropius says that Carinus was betrayed, or at least abandoned.⁴ Later we shall see similar defections in the armies of Vetranius, Magnentius, Maximus, and Eugenius.—doubtless brought about by the gold of Constantius and Theodosius. In these days, when Rome had only mercenaries for soldiers, the best of all war-engines was a well-filled treasury.

This great commotion had unsettled the Empire, encouraged the Barbarians, and impaired the fidelity of the subject-nations, whom Rome imperfectly protected, and ruined by her exactions.

¹ Carinus had one day said to the Roman populace that the wealth of the aristocracy belonged to them, for the reason that they were the true Roman people (*Hist. Aug.*, *Carinus*, 1).

² IMP. C. IVLIANVS P[rius] F[elix] AVG[ustus] and the laurelled bust of Julian. On the reverse: LIBERTAS PVBLICA, surrounding a figure of Liberty. (Gold coin.)

³ *Suorum iactu interiit quod libidine impatiens, militarium nuptas affectabat . . . sese ulti sunt* (Aur. Victor, 39).

⁴ ix. 20.



COIN OF THE USURPER JULIAN.²

The taxes were heavy both in themselves and by reason of the exhaustion of the sources of production.¹ What has been said² of the hardships which oppressed manufactures, trade, and agriculture, of the disappearance of the small landowners, and the desolation of the country, even in its most fertile regions, explains why in the midst of these populations driven wild by suffering (*Gallias effiratus injuriis*),³ insurrections should have broken out. That of the Bagaudae⁴ was for the moment formidable. Fugitive slaves, husbandmen oppressed by their landlords, vagrant peasants, insolvent debtors, became freebooters, and at last formed an army, which gave itself two Caesars, Aelianus and Amandus (285). We have coins struck for these peasant-emperors;⁵ on the reverse of one is the word *Spes*. Using anything as weapons, they flung themselves upon the villages and unwalled cities with the savage ardor of evil instincts when unchained, ravaging, burning, and killing.⁶ Autun, lately the pride of Gaul, was a second time devastated.⁷ Brigand chiefs are often popular favorites, the war they make upon the rich seeming to the poor but legitimate reprisal. The Bagaudae remain in the memory of the people as defenders of the unfortunate. A tradition which took shape in the following centuries even represents this outbreak as a Christian insurrection. It would be no cause for surprise if some Christians were among these insurgents, as there were some in the Gothic bands which had ravaged Asia Minor. Were they not also sufferers from oppression, and might not the spirit of

¹ Julius Caesar required from the Gauls only forty million sesterces (about two million dollars). This was a tax which it was for his interest to render light. Augustus, after reorganizing the pacified Empire, had required from Gaul nearly the same tribute as from Egypt,—twelve thousand five hundred talents (Vell. Paterc., ii. 39, and Strabo, XVII. i. 13), or nearly fourteen million dollars. Savigny believes that in the time of Constantine the tribute had quintupled (Marquardt, *Handb.* ii. 288).

² p. 206.

³ *Paneg. veteres*, vi. 8, edit. of 1676. The word *effiratas* signifies literally “rendered wild or savage.”

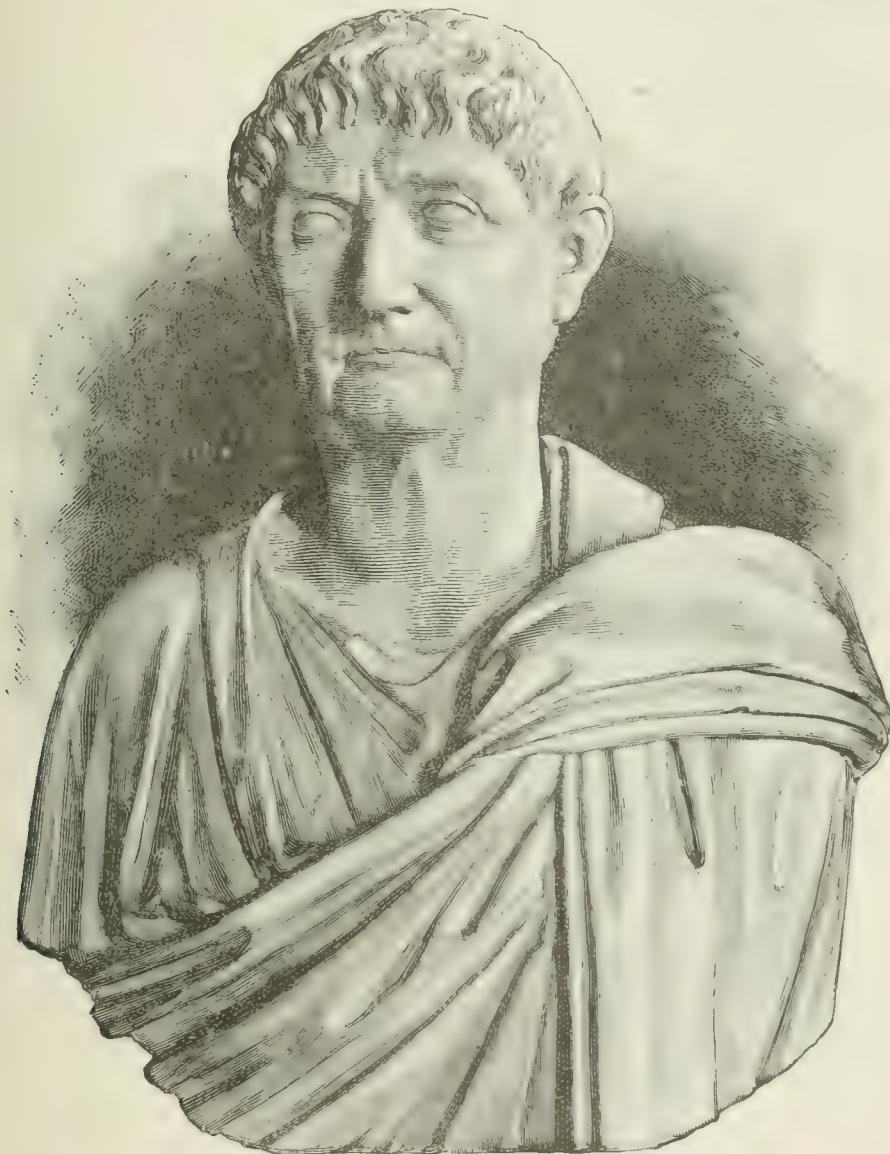
⁴ According to Ducange, the Celtic word *bagud* signifies “a band.” Gallic peasants had already mingled in the tumults of the soldiery in the time of Tetricus (Eumenes, *Paneg. veter.* vii. 4, and *Pro rest. scholis*, 14). For twenty years (254–274) Gaul had been a prey to the devastations of the Barbarians and to civil war.

⁵ But these coins are either counterfeit or else re-minted.

⁶ . . . *Hostem barbarum suorum cultorum rusticus vastator imitatus est* (*Paneg. veter.* ii. 4). Was it to conceal from these plunderers the wealth of the temple of Mercury that the treasure of Bernay was at that time buried? See many objects of this collection, Vol. II. p. 395, and Vol. VI., frontispiece, and pp. 128, 129.

⁷ *Ibid.* iv. 4.

vengeance, which was forbidden to the saints, arm against a world which oppressed them, those who had more wrath than resigna-



DIOCLETIAN.¹

tion?² While Northern Gaul was in a blaze, the Saxons were scouring the North Sea and the British Channel and devastating

¹ Bust of the Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 80.

² In the middle of the second century, Christianity counted in Gaul only the small but fervent community of Lyons. The great mission, organized a century later, founded churches

the coasts, the Franks were astir along the Rhine, other Germans on the Danube, the Moors in Africa, the Persians behind the Tigris; the whole line of the frontiers was threatened, and the Empire shaken to its foundations. Diocletian spent twelve years in securing upon its base the shaken colossus.

He had seen some of the bravest Emperors, men who had saved the state, murdered by their soldiers, and others fall victims to the machinations of their generals. Insurrections of the soldiery, treasonable designs on the part of ambitious men, and attacks from without, were the triple peril which must be averted. If to arrive at the supreme authority there was only one man to overthrow, many would still make the attempt; but it would be difficult to destroy two emperors at the same moment, and this difficulty would be likely to cause the disaffected to hesitate. In the interests of the Empire and of himself, Diocletian therefore had need of a colleague who, having no further personal ambition, would aid in controlling that of others, and at the same time keep the Barbarians in check. From the first century of the Empire this necessity had been recognized. Piso had been adopted by Galba, Trajan by Nerva; in the time of Marcus Aurelius, Severus, the Gordians, Valerian, and Carus,¹ there had been several Emperors at once; and the history of the Thirty Tyrants, which Diocletian studied, had shown him that the enfeebled Empire was exposed to dangers too many for one hand to be sufficient to ward off all the blows. This was the solution of the future,—the one imposed by geography, which is a mighty force; by the natural division of the Empire into two halves, the one Greek, the other Latin; and lastly by the weakness of a state which, no longer able to conquer, was now reduced to self-defence. Surrounded by Barbarians, whom in the days of her strength she had not cared to subjugate and civilize, Rome was now, as it were, a prey in the midst of devouring wolves. The time had come, therefore, to organize a vigorous

in Arles, Narbonne, Toulouse, Limoges, Clermont, Tours, and Paris, which prospered after the edict of toleration issued by Gallienus in 260. In respect to the tardy evangelization of the Gallie provinces, see the publications of the Abbé de Meissas, who boldly combats the wild assertions of the legendary school.

¹ When Carus appointed his two sons Caesars, and intrusted to the elder the government of the Western provinces, while he took the younger with him into the East, he was already anticipating the system of Diocletian,—with this advantage to the latter, that, having no sons, he was able to choose his Caesars from among his ablest officers.

defensive, making, by a division of the power, the imperial action present and effective in all the provinces. As to the rebel legio-naries and the usurping generals, it would probably be easier to prevent their revolts by bestowing a share of power on the most ambitious or most able among them.

Diocletian had that clear view of the public needs which in politics denotes the man of great ability. On the first day of May, 285, he invested with the purple, not one of his own kindred, but a comrade in arms, Maximian; and on this occasion he himself took a new name, Jovius, which may be translated as "devoted to Jupiter." He specially adored this divinity whose name was the beginning of

DIOCLETIAN.¹

his own;² he placed the figure of Jupiter upon his coins, and the statue of the god upon the column before which he presently invested Galerius with the imperial insignia; he built him a temple in the palace of Salona, and made it his study to appear in public ceremonies with the calm majesty of the father of gods and men. To Maximian, whom he adopted as his son,⁴ he gave the name of Hercu-

lius, in memory of the assistance afforded by the son of Alcmena to his divine father during the war of the giants.⁵ These appellations were well chosen to characterize the part each was destined to play,—the one as the ruling thought, the other, the executing

¹ Diocletian, with the name of Jovius. IOVIO DIOCLETIANO AVG. (Bronze medallion.)

² *Dios* is the genitive of Zeus, the Greek Jupiter. Diocletian probably regarded this accidental circumstance as a sign pledging him to the worship of the god.

³ HERCVLIO MAXIMIANO AVG. Maximian and Hercules seated; between them, a Victory. Reverse of the same medallion. (Cohen, No. 105.)

⁴ This adoption seems to be proved by the names M. Aurelius Valerius assumed by Maximian. (Wilmanns, Nos. 769, 1,060, 1,062.)

⁵ *Eadem aurilii opportunitate, qua tuus Hercules Jovem vestrum quondam Terrigenarum bello laborantem magna victoriae parte juvit* (Paneg. ii. 4). The inhabitants of Fano and Pisaurum had already made Hercules the companion and colleague of Aurelian: *Herculi Augusto consorti Domini nostri Aureliani* (Orelli, No. 1,031).

MAXIMIAN HERCULES.³

strength. Maximian was not proclaimed Augustus; his title of Caesar marked a subordinate rank, and the surname which he had accepted pledged him to filial obedience.

From the time of Claudius II., Illyricum, the region of the Empire where there was most fighting, had held the right to provide emperors,¹ as Spain, Gaul, Africa, and Syria had done in their turn. Maximian was the son of a Pannonian colonist in the neighborhood of Sirmium. He was a brave soldier and an experienced general, but of coarse manners, and of mind so uncultivated that he who recaptured Carthage knew nothing of Hannibal, of Scipio, or of Zama; he felt himself the inferior of Diocletian, and was not angry at this consciousness. The Augustus had chosen, therefore, not so much a colleague as a docile lieutenant.

Carus had taken Ctesiphon; but the Persians had quickly recovered possession of it, so that there was only one victory more for Rome, but not an enemy the less. Detained in Asia by the hostile attitude of the Persians, Diocletian despatched the Caesar to Gaul, there to restore order and to give security to the western frontiers. The Seine and the Marne at their junction form a peninsula which the Bagaudae had cut with deep trenches (Saint-Maur-les-Fossés): this was their fortress and camp of refuge; there they collected their booty, and they believed themselves secure against attack. But their bands, undisciplined and poorly armed, could not stand before the legions; in a few weeks this Jacquerie, shut up in its camp of Saint-Maur, perished there.²

The pacification of Gaul gave to the Caesar the title of Augustus (286).³ Diocletian had not ventured to incur the risk that the victorious army, giving to their leader the supreme title, should make of him a rebel. But to this elevation he added the condition that Maximian Hercules should lay aside the purple whenever he himself should set the example, and a solemn oath on the altar of Jupiter consecrated this engagement.⁴

¹ *Italia . . . gentium domina gloriae vetustate, sed Pannonia virtute (Paneg. i. 2).* . . . *In quibus provinciis omnis vita militia est (ib. iii.).*

² *Paneg. veteres*, ii. 8: . . . *Levibus praeliis agrestes domuit (Eutrop. ix. 20).*

³ A rescript of June 21, 286, gives him that title. As Augustus, he became "the brother of Diocletian" (Wilmanns, No. 739), — a title which modern sovereigns interchange with each other.

⁴ This pledge is mentioned twice (in 307 and in 310) by the authors of the *Paneg. veter.* vi. 9: . . . *Consili olim inter eos placiti constantia et pietate fraterna, and vii. 15: . . . Illum in*

The new Augustus had already possessed, as Caesar, the tribunitian and proconsular authority; he now received the title of Pontifex Maximus, which had been shared but once before, namely, by Pupienus and Balbinus. He had his own praetorian prefect, his army, his treasury; and he promulgated decrees which were valid everywhere, although he was intrusted only with the administration of the Western provinces. The unity of command was maintained by the deference that Maximian had promised to his colleague; it was manifested to all eyes by the unity in legislation (all edicts being issued in the name of the two Emperors), and by that of the coinage, which was the same from the banks of the Euphrates to the Rhine. Inscriptions commemorative of public works executed by either bore the names of both;¹ in a word, the administration was divided, but the government was not, Diocletian alone possessing the supreme authority.² In public documents his name preceded that of Maximian, as, later, Constantius was always mentioned before Galerius. This unvarying order proves that, in the system of Diocletian, a certain pre-eminence was reserved to the first Augustus.

For the expedition against the Bagaudae, the posts on the Rhine had been stripped of their garrisons; taking advantage of this situation, the Heruli and Chaviones on the north,³ and the Burgundians and Alemanni on the south, crossed the river. But they arrived too late; Maximian had brought his troops back to Mayence, and from this strong position he kept watch on the movements of the Barbarians. The Burgundians and Alemanni seemed too numerous for him to attack in front, and he allowed them to advance into the desolated provinces, where famine and disease soon reduced their numbers; and when their diminished bands came again within his reach he easily van-

Capitolini Jovis templo jurasse. It is also referred to by Eusebius in his *Life of Constantine*, book i. chap. xviii. The fact is certain, therefore, though not the date. It seems to me probable that it occurred on the day when, receiving from Diocletian the imperial dignity, Maximian could refuse nothing to his benefactor.

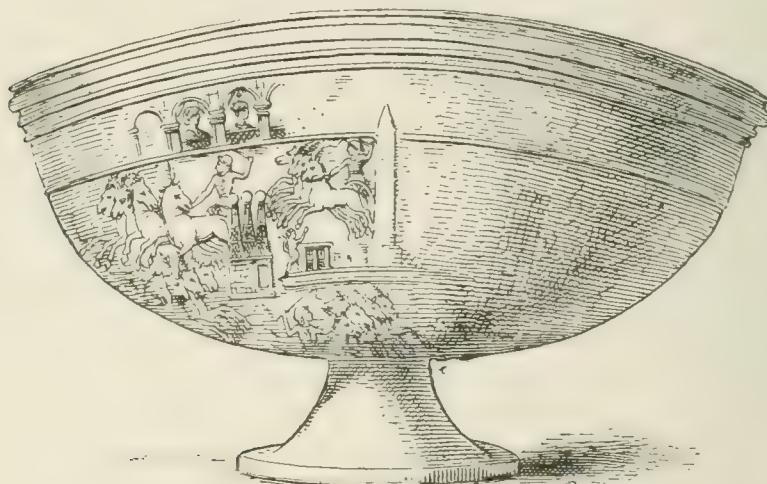
¹ Orelli, Nos. 1,052, 1,054.

² *Cujus nutu omnia gubernabantur* (Aur. Victor).

³ The Chaviones originally occupied northern Holstein. The great movement of the Germanic tribes towards the South, of which we have already spoken (pp. 179 *et seq.*), had brought to the Rhine the Chaviones, the Heruli, and some Burgundians, the main body of the latter nation having stopped in the valley of the Saale.

quished them. The Heruli, less dangerous, had been arrested on their first advance and driven back across the river. These were far from glorious victories; but men cared little what devastation the Barbarians might have made. The Roman dignity at that time was satisfied when the Emperor could say: "The enemy is no longer within the limits of the Empire."

Trèves had become the Rome of the Gallic provinces. It had a palace for the Emperor, arsenals and workshops for the armies, a circus and a forum for the people. On the first of January, 288,



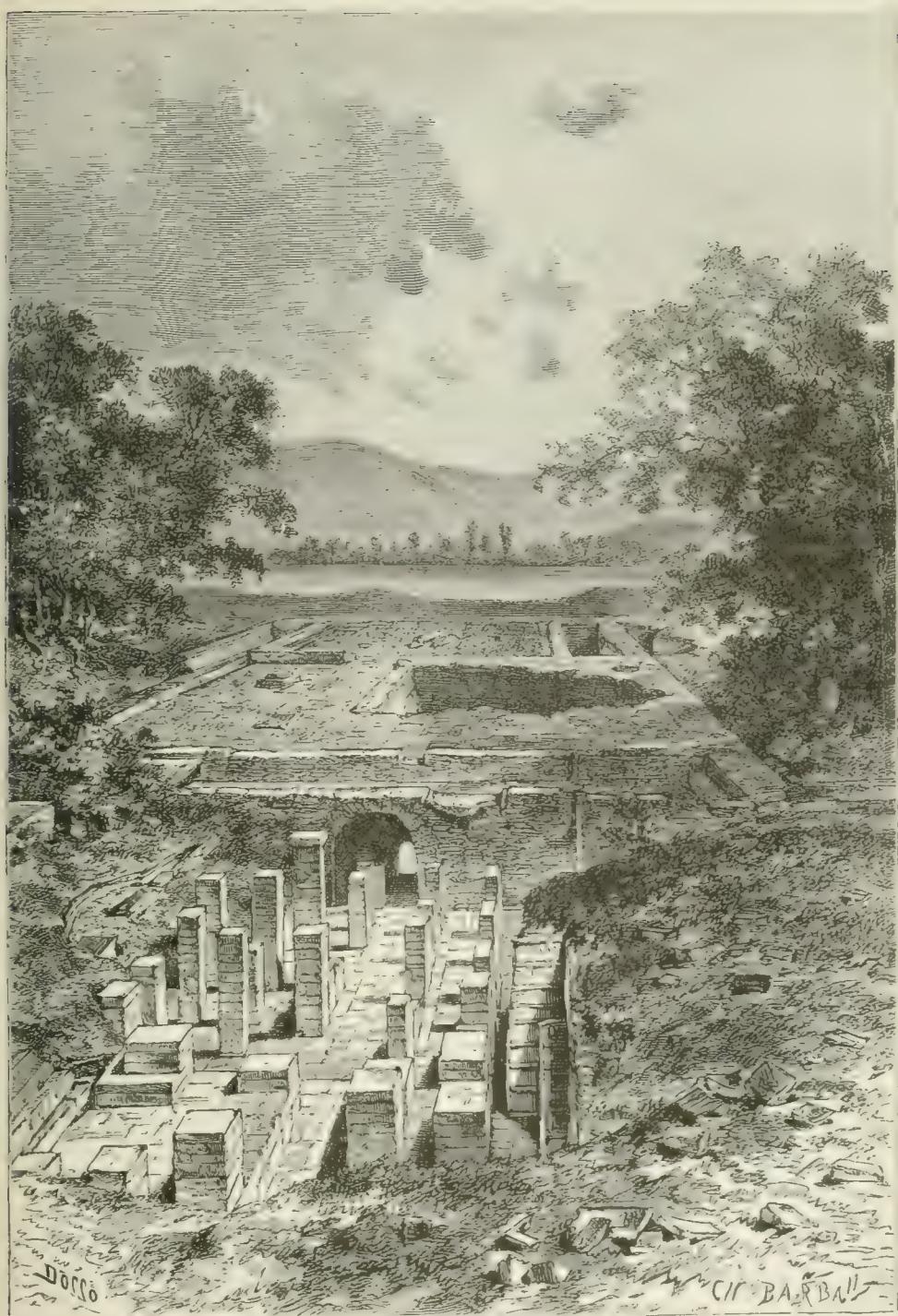
GLASS CUP FOUND AT TRÈVES, REPRESENTING THE GEAT CIRCUS.¹

a public ceremony had attracted thither vast crowds. Maximian for the second time assumed the consular dignity. According to custom, he was about to address the assembly, when a cry was heard from the ramparts: "The Barbarians are at the gates!" The Emperor threw off the consular toga, put on his cuirass, and hastened to meet the foe. It proved to be some German horsemen who had made their way between the outposts, and were on a plundering expedition.² Such was life upon this frontier.

To give chase to the Saxon and Frankish pirates who were ravaging the coasts of Britain and Gaul, Maximian had collected

¹ Wilnowski, *Archaeol. Freunde in Trier und Umgegend*, 1873, p. 18, pl. ii., and Frohner, *La Verrerie antique*, Descript. of the Coll. Charvet, 1879, p. 96.

² Or some Alemannic band astray after the late invasion, who had escaped the soldiers of Maximian (*Paneg. ii. 6*).



RUINS OF HOT BATHS IN A ROMAN VILLA, DISCOVERED IN 1811 AT BOGNOR, IN SUSSEX, ENGLAND (LYSON'S RELIQUIAE BRITANNIAE ROMANAEE, PL. XXV. VOL. III.).

at Boulogne, under the Menapian Carausius, a fleet designed to close the straits. This Carausius, once a galley-slave, had not improved in character with his advance in fortune. He made it his plan to plunder the freebooters who were his compatriots, suffering them to pass freely, but on their return detaining them, and compelling them to share their booty with him. In this manner he collected money enough to buy his officers and crews; and when Maximian pronounced against him sentence of death, no man could be found to execute it. Carausius placed himself out of reach by going over into Britain, where he corrupted the troops and assumed the title of Augustus (287). With a remarkable appreciation of the resources offered by the possession of the island, he organized a powerful marine, which caused his standard to be respected as far as the Pillars of Hercules, and his alliance with the Saxons and Franks secured him soldiers and sailors. Many cities on the Gallic sea-coast preserved their old and profitable commercial intercourse with Britain, and Boulogne even re-

COIN OF
CARAUSIUS.¹

remained in his hands. Carausius therefore was master of his island and of the sea, and Maximian could effect nothing against him. The Emperor made an attempt, however, to reduce him to obedience. A fleet was constructed at the mouths of the Gallic rivers, and on the festival of the Palilia (21st of April, 289) the official panegyrist³ celebrated in Trèves the approaching fall of "the chief of the pirates." The details of the conflict are not in our possession; but we know that the brigand chief came out of it a legitimate emperor, in virtue of a treaty which admitted his title of Augustus, and left to him the kingdom of which he had taken possession (290). The British mints issued coins with the figure of Hercules, "preserver of the three Augsti;" and others bear the words: "Carausius and his brothers."

SMALL BRONZE.²

This treaty was a confession of impotence; but Diocletian considered it as an armistice necessary until more propitious days

¹ Coin of Carausius, with the legend: VIRTVS CARAVSIVS. (Cohen, No. 35.)

² Carausius, Diocletian, and Maximian Hercules. CARAVSIVS ET FRATRES SVI. Radiate head of Carausius, with the bare heads of Diocletian and Maximian Hercules.

³ He is known as Mamertinus, but the name is not given by the older manuscripts.

should come. He was not willing that Maximian should withdraw his attention and his troops from Germany ; he himself had been obliged to go into Syria, in order to keep watch upon Egypt,—where turbulent Alexandria was causing anxiety,—and upon the Persians, whose courage had been revived by the death of Carus. The prolonged sojourn of the Emperor and an army so near the Persian frontier, together with a civil war caused by a competitor for the throne, decided king Bahram to avoid all disagreements with the Romans. His envoys came to meet Diocletian as the Emperor drew near the Euphrates, bringing presents from their master and soliciting his friendship.

Diocletian for the moment asked nothing more, preoccupied as he was with an affair more important for the security of the Empire than any new victory over cavalry impossible to capture. For the last twenty-seven years Armenia had been a Persian province ; and since the time of Augustus, even since that of Pompey, the traditional policy of Rome had been to retain this country under her influence. An heir to the Armenian crown, Tiridates, was now living at the imperial court, where by his amiable deportment he had gained the regard of the most important men, and by his courage, his strength, and his skill in martial exercises, the esteem and respect of the soldiers. This prince was an invaluable instrument for the execution of a design suggested to the mind of Diocletian by the anarchy prevailing in Persia. Given up to all the woes of a foreign rule, Armenia had been wounded in her religion and in her patriotism : the statues of her kings had been thrown down, the objects of her worship profaned, her nobles excluded from public office ; and an intense hatred brooded in the hearts of all. Everything was ready, therefore, for a revolution, and the domestic troubles of Persia rendered success probable. Tiridates set out, with the instructions and good wishes of Diocletian, but without ostensible assistance. This was, in fact, not needed, and would moreover have been a violation of the promised friendship lately granted to king Bahram. As soon as the new claimant appeared, defections occurred in every direction. Tiridates ascended the throne of his fathers, and thenceforth held in the interest of Rome that great fortress of Armenia which protected against the Persians Asia Minor and a part of the Syrian provinces (287).

This bloodless victory, gained by statecraft, was an important success. To avoid all complaints on the part of the Persian king, Diocletian had quitted Syria before the departure of Tiridates on this expedition. A rescript shows him to have been in Thrace in the middle of October, 286;¹ thence he went into Pannonia, which was ravaged by Sarmatian bands, and into Rhaetia, where it was needful to show the eagles. Following the example of the great Emperors, he visited the frontiers, to restore security with the restoration of respect for the name of Rome; and everywhere he repaired the line of defences which had been trodden down under the feet of the Barbarians.²

Maximian had come from Gaul to meet his colleague; in their conference doubtless were concerted the measures against Carausius which that skilful usurper was able to defeat the following year. The rare and confused documents of this period do not enable us to reconstruct its life;⁴ we are reduced to deriving from the panegyries or the

MAXIMIAN.³

¹ Mommsen, *Ueber die Zeitfolge der in den Rechtbüchern enthaltenen Verordnungen Diocletians*, in the *Journal of the Academy of Sciences* of Berlin, 1860, pp. 349-447. Tillemont, in his learned history, began the work of placing the rescripts in their chronological order, and Godefroy gives a chronology of the laws of the *Theodosian Code*, i. 5-214, edit. of 1737.

² . . . *Omnia quae priorum labo conciderant . . . resurgentia, tot urbes din silvis obsitas . . . instaurari moenibus . . . castra toto Rheno et Istri et Euphratis limite restituta* (Eumenes, *Panegyric*. iv. 18). Suidas (s. v. ἐσχατια) speaks in the same way: ὁ Διοκλετιανὸς λόγος ποιοίμενος τῶν πραγμάτων, φήθη δεῖν διναιμέσιν ἀρχεῖσαις ἐκαστην ἐσχατιανὸν ὄχιτρον καὶ φρούρια ποιῆσαι.

³ Half figure of marble; fragment of an armed statue found in the capital of Carinthia (Clarac, *Musée de sculpt.* pl. 980, No. 2,526).

⁴ Aurelius Victor, Eutropius, and Zonaras give each of them but a few lines to Diocletian, and scarcely more can be extracted from the bad rhetoric of the panegyrists or the eloquent invectives of Lactantius. What Zosimus says of Diocletian has been lost.

political pamphlets — two very imperfect sources — a few isolated facts, without being able to establish between them that connection of cause and effect which forms the solid texture of history. The rescripts issued by the Emperors show indeed the cities where they were at the time, but give no hint of the interests which had called them thither; these interests can only be conjectured by placing beside the dates inscribed on these decrees the legend of some coin, or a word let fall by the poor writers of the time. Thus we find in February, 291, Maximian at Rheims, at Trèves, and in the country of the Nervii, where, carrying out the disastrous policy of Augustus and Tiberius, he established Frankish prisoners as colonists.¹ In January, 290, Diocletian is at Sirmium, in February at Adrianopolis, in April at Byzantium, in May at Antioch. He drives out of Syria the Saracens who had come in to pillage, and we find him again at Sirmium in the middle of July. This was like the activity of Julius Caesar.² It has not been usual to recognize this diligence and this laborious life in the Emperor who established that severe etiquette whose supreme expression came to be the immovable majesty of the Byzantine Emperors.

The occurrences which recalled Diocletian in so great haste to the shores of the Danube, where he remained till the close of this year, 290, were the great national movements then agitating Germany. Sanguinary encounters were taking place; the Goths were falling upon those of the Burgundians who had followed them in the East, the Taifales and the Thervinges upon the Gepidae and the Vandals.³ It was impossible to say what might arise out of this confusion, — possibly a new invasion. But the Emperors guarded the frontier, and nothing could pass.

¹ Also, possibly, Sarmatian. Ausonius, in his poem on the Moselle, speaks of Sarmatian colonies established near Trèves.

² . . . *Illum modo Syria viderat, jam Pannonia suscepérat* (*Paneg. veter.* iii. 4).

³ *Paneg. veter.* iii. 16 and 17: *Ruunt omnes in sanguinem suum populi . . . obstinataeque feritatis poenas, nunc sponte persolvunt.*

II.—THE TETRARCHY.

EARLY in the year 291 the two Augusti crossed the Alps in all the severity of winter to have another conference at Milan.¹ Diocletian was meditating a reorganization of the state. The division of power made in 286 had been only partially successful, because the part assigned to each Emperor was still too great for the action of the government to be everywhere prompt and effectual. Dangers were increasing. In the East, the pacific Bahram was dying, and the Persians would again become a source of danger. In the North, the Barbaric world was pushing forward its turbulent tribes towards the Rhine and the Danube. The Chemavi and the Frisones had seized upon Batavia, at the mouths of the Rhine,—a tract half land, half sea, a domain divided with even less certainty between the Germans and the Empire. At this time all the shore of the North Sea, from the Meuse to Jutland, was bordered with a population who sailed the seas in search of Gallic merchant vessels. In the interior, extensive provinces were becoming detached from the Empire: Egypt was about to proclaim an Emperor. Britain had already done this,—which signified that both countries were aspiring to independence.—and the Moors of Africa were claiming their liberty, sword in hand. Diocletian considered it wise to complete his political system; he decided that the two Augusti should take to themselves, under the title of Caesars, two lieutenants, who should be regarded as heirs. It was his hope that the Empire would thus be better guarded, the ambition of subalterns more certainly controlled, and the grave question of the succession settled, without giving opportunity in future for the soldiers to intervene with their caprices and their demands. The first day of March, 293, Constantius and Galerius were proclaimed Caesars.²

Theoretically, this conception was a happy one: with Diocletian it could succeed, thanks to the authority which his wisdom proved

¹ The remembrance of this occasion was perpetuated by coins bearing the words: *Concordia Augg.*

² Orelli, No. 467, and C. I. L. vol. ii. No. 1,439. The two Caesars were designated consuls for the year 294, and must have been so from the first year after their elevation.

by ten years of firm and successful rule, gave him; and it is with good reason that contemporaries have praised the harmony which he knew how to maintain among princes of characters so different. But in this system he had not taken into account the rivalries which would inevitably break out after his time, the impatient

ambition of the Caesars and the mutual jealousy of the Augusti who should succeed the founders of the tetrarchy. His plan met the fate of so many other projects inspired by political sagacity, which passion or unfavorable circumstances have shipwrecked. However, when to this reform in the constitution of the government we add that which Diocletian also made in the administration, we shall be obliged to recognize in this ruler a very high order of intellect, and to place him in the first rank of Roman Emperors. The name of Charlemagne has remained great, although

CONSTANTIUS CHLORUS.¹

his work also failed; it is true that it lasted for a longer time.²

Galerius was a Dacian who had been a shepherd in his youth,

¹ Bust of the Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 80.

² Charlemagne pursued the same plan as did Diocletian, in giving three of his sons the title of kings, while holding them subject to his superior will. At the division of 817 the sons of Louis le Débonnaire were similarly placed. Charlemagne also organized his army on the Roman principle, that the military service was a charge on property. Again, like the Romans, he laid the keeping up of roads and bridges upon the adjacent landowners, who were bound, moreover, to furnish subsistence for the Emperor or his agents when passing over their lands. One of the injunctions of Charlemagne to his counts in respect to their fiscal vigilance is a sentence from two of Justinian's *novellae* (viii. 8, and xvii. 1); and his bishops were like Constantine's, — state functionaries. How many Roman institutions we find in the Middle Ages if we examine them closely!

and whose family, fleeing before the invasion of the Carpae, had taken refuge near Sardica (Sophia) in the Dacia of Aurelian. From a shepherd he became a soldier. He was another Maximian, rude and coarse; but like him, also, obedient and faithful, without education, but not without courage, of violent and cruel nature, useful in a secondary position if held there, but wholly unsuited to the highest rank.¹ With Constantius, on the contrary, reappeared qualities that had been long unknown in the Emperors,—gentle and elegant manners, a cultivated mind, an amiable character, and (a thing always of importance among these new men) a noble

SILVER COIN.²SMALL BRONZE.³MEDIUM BRONZE.⁴

lineage, his mother being a niece of Claudio Gotlieus, and his father belonging to an old Macedonian family. Under Aurelian he had distinguished himself by defeating the Alemanni near Windisch (274), and Carus, it is said, had thought of adopting him. The pallor of his countenance had caused him to be called by the Greeks Chlorus, or the “Yellow;” and to claim kinship with him, all the Emperors, down to Theodosius, took his family name, Flavius,⁵ as Severus and his successors had taken those of the Antonines. Being appointed Caesar before Galerius, Constantius was to succeed that one of the two Augusti who should first quit the world or the political stage.

Constantius and Galerius were married. They now repudiated their wives, of whom one, Helena, who had been united to

¹ Church writers have accumulated all forms of accusation against Galerius. According to them he was made up entirely of vices and cruelties. Eutropius speaks otherwise of him: *Vir et probe moratus et egregius in re militari* (x. 2). As administrator, the Empire owed him a new province, Valeria, which he formed in Pannonia by turning a forest into cultivated land and causing the Danube to flow into Lake Pelso (Aur. Victor, *Caes.* 40).

² GAL. VALERIA AVG. [usta], daughter of Diocletian, and wife of Galerius.

³ FL. MAX. THEODORA AVG., second wife of Constantius Chlorus.

⁴ CONSTANTIVS ET MAXIMIANVS AVG. Laurelled heads.

⁵ The usurper Maximus gave this *gentilicium* to his son Victor (Wilmanns, No. 824). Eugenius took it, and Valentinian III. again bore it (*ibid.* 645).

Constantius by that marriage of the second order which the Romans called concubinage,¹ has remained famous as the mother of Constantine and a zealous Christian. After this sacrifice made to policy, the Caesars married the daughters of the two Augusti.—Galerius the daughter of Diocletian, whose lieutenant he was; Constantius the daughter of Maximian, under whose orders he was placed. Each was subordinated to that Emperor whose faults he balanced or whose virtues he complemented by opposite merits: warlike energy was joined with wisdom, mildness with strength. Diocletian took with him the youth Constantine, then nineteen years of age. This was as a pledge of the father's fidelity,—a needless precaution in the case of such a man as Constantius, but one long practised at the imperial court.²

Diocletian had reserved to himself the administration of the

¹ Zosimus, Orosius, and the *Alexandrian Chronicle* affirm this, Saint Ambrose implies it, the Benedictines, his editors, admit it (note to the *Opera S. Ambrosii*, ii. 1210), and we find no weight in the objections which Tillemont draws from the virtuous character of Constantius Chlorus, and Gibbon from the condition of illegitimacy which would have prevented Constantine from being his father's heir. It has been already explained (Vol. VI. p. 460, note 1) that no disgrace attached to marriages of this kind. Many reasons gave cause for them, among others the inferior condition of the woman; and we know that Helena was an innkeeper's daughter (*stabularia*, says Saint Ambrose). Constantine had also, before his elevation, a concubine, Minervina, who was the mother of Crispus (Zosimus, ii. 20, the author of the *Epitome*, 41, and Zonaras, xiii. 2). Concubinage was a real marriage,—*conjugium inaequale*, says Theodosius, *licita consuetudo*, says Justinian; and it was as well accepted by the legists and by the Church as is in our days themorganatic marriage of the Germans. The Bishop of Seville, Saint Isidore, wrote: *Christianus non duus simul habere licitum est, aut uxorem, aut certe loco uxoris concubinam*: and the Fathers of the First Council of Toledo, in 400, think the same in their seventeenth canon: *Qui non habet uxorem et pro uxore concubinam habet a communione non repellatur*. Similar decisions were made by the Councils of Mayence, 815, and of Tibur, 895. The condition of the children of these unions was not in civil law the same with that of children born of full legal marriages. Thus Libanius, in his twelfth discourse, asserts that the brothers of Constantine, born of Theodora, had more right than he to the Empire,—which would confirm Gibbon's opinion. But Constantius Chlorus and Constantine did not feel themselves bound by these ancient rules. Each of them had a son grown to manhood, capable of succeeding his father, and meanwhile of being useful to him, and also children of a second marriage who were still very young. The eldest was useful—necessary, even; the others were not so; and the omnipotence of the two Augusti sanctioned all. Constantine, so severe on "unequal marriages" (law of 337, *Code Just.* v. 27, 1), made a law giving all the rights of legitimate children to those born while their parents were living in concubinage, if the latter should afterwards contract *justae nuptiae* (*ibid.* v. 27, 5). It would seem as if this law, whose date is unknown, may have been suggested to Constantine by the memory of his mother and of his first wife.

² When Maxentius demanded of the viceroy of Africa that the latter should give him his son as a hostage, he refused to do it (Zosimus, ii. 12). Aur. Victor says of Galerius that he detained Constantine at his court, *ad vicem obsidis* (*Curs. 40*). Commodus retained at Rome the sons of the governors of provinces (*Herodian*, iii. 4). Before the news of his proclamation as emperor arrived at Rome, Severus caused his children to be removed from the city.

East, with Egypt, Libya, the islands, and Thrace; Galerius was to take charge of the Danubian provinces and Illyricum, with Macedon, Greece, and Crete. In the West, Maximian had the government of Italy, Africa, and Spain, and Constantius had Gaul and Britain.¹

The Caesars, being invested with the tribunitian power² and the military *imperium*, were treated as royal personages, and wore the diadem.³ Their names were often placed with those of the Augusti at the head of edicts, but they issued none by their own authority; and in the case of an ordinance made for a part of the Empire governed by a Caesar, the act bore indeed with the names of the two Augusti that of the Caesar concerned in its execution, but never the name of the other Caesar. The legislative power remained undivided between the two Augusti, as it had been between Severus and Caracalla, and between Valerian and Gallienus; or rather, it was entirely in the hands of him who was the soul of this government, Diocletian.⁴ The Augusti entered the Caesarian provinces at their pleasure, and exercised there a supreme authority. Thus, in the absence of the Gallic Caesar, Maximian guarded the Rhenish frontier, and Diocletian in residing at Sirmium was not outside his imperial domain; most of his rescripts are dated from Illyricum or from Thrace. The Caesar received orders and even reprimands from the Augustus. We shall see that Diocletian called Galerius into the East after a defeat which the latter had suffered, and treated him with the severity of early times.⁵ There seem to reappear, under other names and with a great difference in the duration of the authority, the ancient dictator and his master of the horse.

Each one of the four rulers selected a capital. The two Caesars established themselves on the frontier.—Galerius at Sirmium, the central point of defence in the middle valley of the Danube; Constantius by turns at Trèves or at York, to protect Gaul or Britain.

¹ Laetantius (*De Morte pers.* 8) gives Spain to Maximian; referring to the persecution by Diocletian, he says further (chap. xvi.): *Vexabatur universa terra, præter Gallias*, where Constantine was in command. Tingitanian Mauretania formed part of the district of Spain.

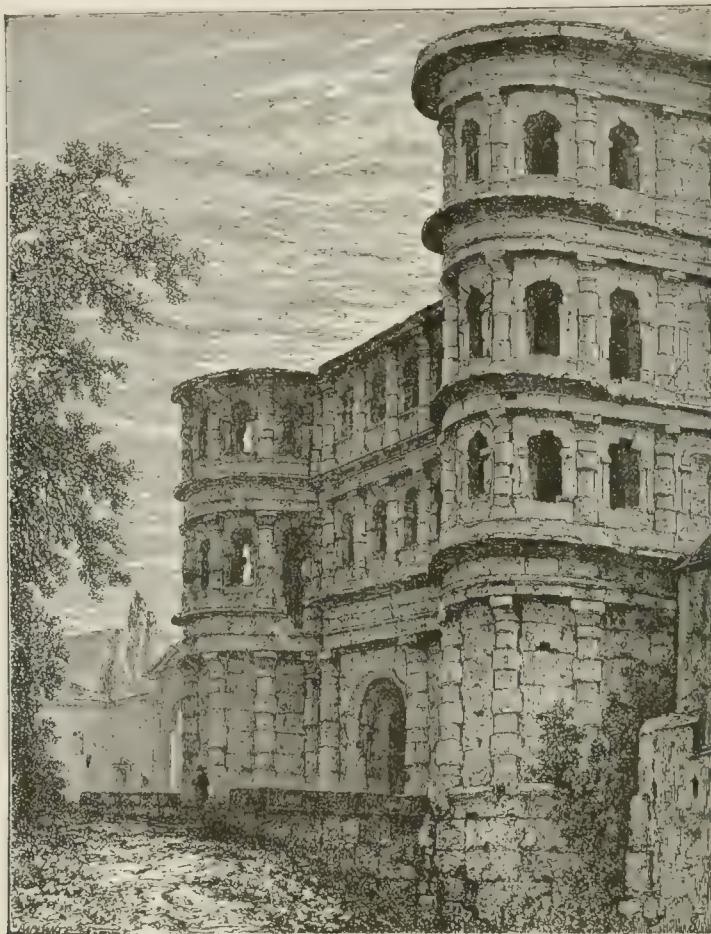
² Wilmanns, No. 1,061, and *Paneg. veter.* v. 1: . . . *Cum aroud maiestatem tuam divina virtutum vestrarum miracula praedicarim.* The Caesars were called *nobilissimi*.

³ Euseb., *Life of Constantine*, i. 18.

⁴ . . . *Valerium ut parentem suspiciebant* (Aur. Victor, 39).

⁵ Under Constantius the Caesars, Gallus and Julian, were merely lieutenants of the Emperor

The two Augusti placed themselves in the second line,—Maximian at Milan,¹ behind the Alps, but having within reach the Germans, who were making an attempt to establish themselves in Rhaetia and the upper valley of the Rhine; and Diocletian at Nicomedeia,



ROMAN GATE, CALLED THE BLACK GATE, AT TRÈVES.

on the shore of the Sea of Marmora, whence he kept watch at once upon the Tigris, the lower Danube, and the Euxine, by way of which so many dangerous invasions had come in. At the same time no one of them confined himself to the city which he had

¹ Here Maximian built a palace and baths, of which there remain the sixteen columns which decorate San Lorenzo. The church itself, of octagonal form and surmounted with a cupola, like the so-called temple of Jupiter at Salona, seems also to have been one of the great halls of the palace or of the thermae of Maximian mentioned by Ausonius in his little poem, *Ordo nobilium urbium*.

MILAN: THE SIXTEEN ANTIQUE COLUMNS OF SAN LORENZO (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH).



made his chief residence; incessantly they were in motion along the frontier, which was well guarded; and if the Barbarians did not fall back, at least they no longer advanced.

Constantius had orders to resume against Carausius the expedition which had failed in 289. The treaty signed after the Roman defeat had been violated by the usurper's alliance with the Franks, to whom he promised the islands of the Batavi and all the coast as far as the River Scheldt; the plundering of the Gallic coast had doubtless been recommenced.¹ Carausius had a garrison at Boulogne and a squadron in the harbor; Constantius closed the port by a dyke, and both garrison and vessels were obliged to surrender. Before attempting a descent into Britain he made an expedition against the Franks, pursuing them into their marshes between the Wahal, the Rhine, and Lake Flevo, — a submerged territory easy to defend, but badly defended, however, by the Barbarians.² He drove them back into Germany, and distributed his numerous captives, under the title of colonists, through certain portions of the territory of Amiens, Beauvais, Troyes, and Langres, which had been laid waste by the Bagaudae.³

Carausius was assassinated in 293 by his praetorian prefect Allectus, who took his place and kept it three years; but the new master of Britain had neither the skill nor the power of

¹ . . . *Bellum quod cunctis provinciis videbatur* (*Pan. vet. v. 7*).

² *Illa regio . . . terra non est* (*Pan. vet. v. 8*).

³ Roman vase found in the neighborhood of Amiens. This bronze vase is part of the collection of M. Danicourt de Péronne. We give it in its actual size.

⁴ As late as the seventh century there existed, near Langres, a *pagus Chamariorum* (Guérard, *Divisions territoriales de la Gaule*).



ROMAN VASE.³

"the arch-pirate."¹ The praetorian prefect, Asclepiodotus, having collected a fleet off the mouth of the Seine, crossed unseen one foggy day, and landed in the southern part of the island. To increase the determination of his soldiers, the Roman burned his vessels. Allectus was awaiting in the Isle of Wight the attack of Constantius, who had another fleet at Boulogne. Rendered anxious by the descent of the prefect, he hastened in disorder to meet him. was defeated and killed; and when Constantius arrived on the coast of Kent, the population, happy to be rid of these Emperors, who for ten years had isolated them from the rest of the Empire, welcomed him as a savior (296).

ALLECTUS.²

The city of London was already the chief market of Britain, and the Barbarian auxiliaries of Allectus had hastened thither in order to pillage. A part of the Caesar's fleet, astray in the fog, had entered the Thames; carried by the tide, these vessels arrived before the city in season to save it,—a service which the inhabitants recognized with gratitude.³

Maximian had quitted Milan, his usual residence, and had come to exhibit to the Barbarians, in the absence of Constantius, the imperial purple, lest they might be inclined to take advantage of the departure of the troops and fall upon Gaul. When the expedition was ended, the Augustus set out for Africa, while the Caesar returned to keep in his turn the guard over the Rhine. This vigilance could not be for a moment slackened, for the Alemanni never resisted the temptation to make a raid into the Gallic provinces. In 301 they crossed the Rhine, the Ill, and the Vosges mountains, and very nearly captured Constantius himself near Langres. He had been wounded, and was saved only by being drawn up with ropes to the top of the rampart.⁴ Some troops were in the neighborhood, who, hastening up, chased away these marauders; Eutropius represents them as an immense army, speaking of sixty thousand killed and an enormous number of prisoners. Eusebius reduces the number of the slain to six thousand, which is still large. The captives were given up, under the title of colonists or *Laeti*, to the Lingones and Treveri owning land.

¹ . . . *Archipiratam satelles occidit* (*Pan. vet. v. 12*).² Allectus, crowned with laurel.³ *Ibid. v. 17.*⁴ Eutropius, ix. 23.



THE TETRARCHATE

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------|--|----------------------|
| | Share of Diocletian | | Limits of the Empire |
| | Maximus | | Dioceses |
| | Galerius | | Provinces |
| | Constantius Chlorus | | |

They thus occupied, with the consent of the Empire, the left bank of the Rhine, where, except in the cities, they caused the German race and speech to predominate.¹ Eumenes saw some of them come as far as Trèves and even Autun, "accompanied by their wives and children, sad or desperate, and wildly shaking their chains ; but by degrees they grew milder, and cultivated the soil which they once ravaged, or, at the call of the generals, eagerly resumed their weapons, bent to the centurion's vine-stock, and were willing to fight and die for those who had torn them from the paternal forests."

This Eumenes, whose works we have, was the friend and secretary of Constantius; aiming to rival Cicero, he wrote panegyrics, where rhetoric and hyperbole have more place than eloquence and truth. Some interesting details, however, are found in his writings concerning the schools of Autun. Constantius raised this city from its ruins. He rebuilt its baths, temples, and the aqueduct which brought abundant water ; he also strove to reconstruct the city in its intellectual relations, restoring life and distinction to its schools, whither formerly the Gallic youth flocked in crowds, and he wrote to Eumenes, putting him in charge of these schools, a letter which does him great honor : "Our Gauls deserve from us that we should take care of their children ; and what better could we offer them than knowledge, the only thing that fortune can neither give nor take away ? Accordingly, we have determined to place you at the head of these schools, to which we desire to restore all their former distinction. You will there direct the mind of youth towards the study of better living. Do not fear that in accepting you will derogate from the honors you have already acquired. That you may understand that our esteem for you is proportioned to your merits, your salary will be 600,000 sesterces, paid by the state."²

¹ The *Notitia dignitatum* (ii. 119-122) indicates an extensive distribution of the Laeti through Gaul, and only there. These Laeti, who have given rise to so many discussions, did not belong to any one German tribe ; they were either captives whom the Empire established upon deserted territory, or German adventurers who had solicited lands in return for military service. Guérard says in the *Polyptique d'Irminon* (i. 254) : "I have no doubt that the name *Laeti* had the signification of *auxilia* in the language of the nations of Germany. The word *lid* or *led* has preserved this meaning in the most ancient monuments of the northern languages."

² *Pun. ret. iv. 14.* In 376, at Trèves, the professor of eloquence (*rhetor*) received thirty rations (*triginta annonas*), the *grammaticus Latinus* twenty, the *grammaticus Graecus* twelve, *si qui dignus reperiri potuerit* (*Code Théod.* xiii. 3, 11).

We must place it to the credit of this Emperor that, in the days of the Roman decline, he had a taste for noble pursuits, and bestowed liberal recompense upon those who kept alive the last embers of the sacred fire, now so nearly extinct.

Eumenes was worthy of his master; he employed his 600,000 sesterces in the reconstruction of the schools, and they were opened with great public ceremonial. The governor of the province presided at the festival, and Eumenes made his finest oration. Words of sincere emotion are found in this address, and even of eloquence, when he exclaims, for example, pointing out to the governor's notice the distant ruins of the gymnasium which is about to be rebuilt: "You have seen on the walls of these porticos the earth represented with its nations, its cities and rivers, with its continents that the ocean enwraps like a girdle, that it separates from one another, or that it cleaves with its impetuous waves. In the presence of these pictures we shall explain the world, and relate the history of our invincible princes. When the messengers of victory come to tell us that our Emperors are visiting arid Libya, or Persia with the twin rivers, or the shores of the Nile or of the Rhine, we shall say to the youth gathered about us: 'Do you see this region? This is Egypt, chastised by Diocletian, and now reposing after its tumults. Here is Carthage and Africa, where Maximian exterminated the revolted Moors. This land is Batavia; this island Britain, with its gloomy forests, rearing its rough head above the waves: these Constantius holds under his powerful hand. Yonder, Galerius treads under foot the bows and quivers of the Persians.' It is a pleasure to study a representation of the world where there is nothing which does not belong to ourselves."¹ We have been accustomed to believe that our own age invented "object lessons;" but the Romans already had the idea two thousand years ago.²

The expedition into Africa of which Eumenes speaks took

¹ *Pro restaurandis scholis*, 20.

² *Ibid.* 20: . . . *Quo manifestius oculis discernentur quae difficilius percipiuntur auditu.* Horace had already said the same thing in his *Ars Poetica*, 180; Varro (*De Re rust.*) speaks of a picture representing *in pariete pictam Italianam*: Propertius, iv. 3, 37: . . . *E tabula pictos ediscere mundos.* This was, says Florus, at the beginning of his history, a common usage: practised from the time of Alexander, adds Aelianus (*Hist. Var.* iii. 28), and Agrippa did but follow it. *Erat autem*, says Pliny (*Ep.* viii. 14), *antiquitus institutum ut a majoribus natu non auribus modo, verum etiam oculis disceremus.*

place in 297. Five powerful Moorish nations had taken up arms. "They were," say the writers of the time, "the most savage of the African races." Like the tribes of the Sahara, always ready for a raid upon the Algerine oases, these Moors had often burned the farms of the African colonists. One of Diocletian's lieutenants had already several times encountered them.¹ In 293 they recommenced their incursions, and threw the whole province into a state of uneasiness, of which a usurper, Julian (?) by name, took advantage to assume the purple in Carthage. This usurpation rendered the situation so serious that the Augustus of the Western provinces felt it necessary to show himself in Africa. After defeats, concerning which we have no details, Julian died by his own hand; the conquered Moors were pursued into the most inaccessible retreats in the Atlas; and the captives which were made were transported into other provinces. To stifle the last embers of this fire, for a moment formidable, Maximian remained in Africa till the middle of the year 298.

These successes of the Caesar and the Augustus of the Western provinces were matched by those of Galerius upon the middle Danube, which river he had in charge. The Iazyges were defeated, and a part of the nation of the Carpae transported into Pannonia (295).

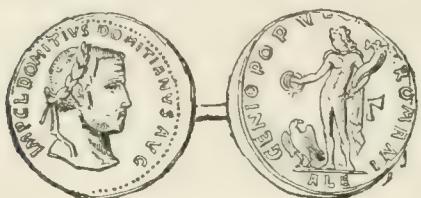
Some years later, in 299, the Sarmatians and the Bastarnae were also constrained to emigrate to the right bank of the Danube.² This system, begun in the first days of the Empire, was still pursued; Constantine, Valens, and Theodosius in turn continued it; and the frontier provinces were thus peopled with secret enemies, who would begin by driving out the Roman civilization, and afterwards open the gates to other invaders. The Emperors believed their power eternal; they expected to have time to Romanize these foreign colonists. On the contrary, from the Scheldt to the Save, the Barbarians Germanized the zone of colonization that was given up to them, and peopled with Slavs the peninsula of the Balkans.

Diocletian had remained during these years in Pannonia.

¹ *Bulletin de correspondance africaine*, January, 1882, p. 16.

² *Ingentes captivorum copias in Romanis iuriibus lowarerunt* (Eutrop. ix. 25). Even the body-guard of the Emperors was formed of Barbarians (Laetantius, *Dc Morte pers.* 38).

Moesia, and Thrace, visiting the defences of the Danube,¹ inspiring salutary fear among the Barbarians who bordered its left bank, and, notwithstanding this prolonged stay on the extreme frontier, remaining, in a sense, present at all points of the Empire by the attention he gave to its wants. A multitude of rescripts dated from these regions show his legislative activity.² Under the powerful influence of this great ruler the Empire revived, security was restored to the provinces, and for this vast body, including all the civilized life of the world, it was enough to bring back prosperity that a strong hand kept the Barbarians at bay and the soldiers submissive.

COIN OF ACHILLEUS.³

There was one country, however, in which prosperity did not again revive,—turbulent Egypt. In the capital of that country seethed an immense population of men of all races, conditions, and faiths, and

under that burning sun men readily became hot-headed. Worshippers of Serapis, of Jehovah, or of Jesus, sceptics and *illuminati*, philosophers in search of the absolute, and neophytes who believed they had found it, all detested and despised one another. Hatred brought about riots, and riots became revolt. As soon as one man had struck, all came to blows; the streets were full of dead bodies, and in the harbor the sea was red with blood. “There is not a Christian,” says the Bishop, Dionysius, “who is not involved on one side or the other.” On Easter Day the church stood empty, for all men were at the barricades. The murders of which the Bishop speaks were in the reign of Gallienus; but the spirit of revolt still possessed the great city. We have seen Aurelian and Probus obliged to visit Alexandria to overthrow usurpers, and

¹ Idacius places at this time the construction of the strongholds in the country of the Sarmatians on the left bank of the Danube, and inscriptions mention the reconstruction, by Diocletian and Maximian, of cities in Switzerland, Africa, etc. The oration of Eumenes *Pro restaurandis scholis* testifies to the immense works at that time going on for the fortification of the frontiers along the Rhine, the Danube, and the Euphrates. From the *Notitia* have been counted 103 strongholds or fortified positions in the Eastern Empire.

² Letter from Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, quoted by Eusebius, vii. 21.

³ Bronze coin of Domitius Domitianus Achilleus. IMP. CL. DOMITIVS DOMITIANVS AVG., surrounding a wreathed head of the usurper. On the reverse: GENIO POPVLI ROMANI ALE, around the Genius of the Roman people.

under the reign of Diocletian, Achilleus even ventured to assume the purple there.¹

This rebellion was a disaster for Rome, for it hindered the provisioning of the city; but it was not a peril to the Empire, since out of Egypt could come no dangerous enemy. The Emperors, no longer residing in their ancient capital, did not hear the starving cries of its populace, who demanded indeed *panem et circenses*, but made no riots. The insurrection breaking out in Alexandria did not therefore draw them away from more important duties upon the northern frontier. That region being pacified, Diocletian set out for Egypt, arriving there in the middle of the year 295. Alexandria resisted all his efforts for eight months, and he only entered the city after having cut the aqueducts which brought the water of the Canopic branch of the Nile. To end these perpetual revolts, which were a dangerous example, he gave the city up to a military execution; it was sacked, and blood flowed in torrents. Coptos and Busiris shared the same fate.² The country was then reorganized. Eutropius, who lived nearly a century later, says that this reorganization, of which he does not give the particulars, still remained in force in his time.³ Like Augustus, Diocletian respected the Egyptian religion; but in that land of prodigies and credulity books of occult science were everywhere in circulation, and these the Emperor caused to be seized and burned.⁴ He did another service to Egypt by protecting the country against the Blemmyes, who plundered caravans coming from ports of the Red Sea, and infested the Thebaïd with their brigandage. Instead of wasting his time and strength in tracking them in their deserts, he called in the little garrisons scattered through lower Nubia, between the

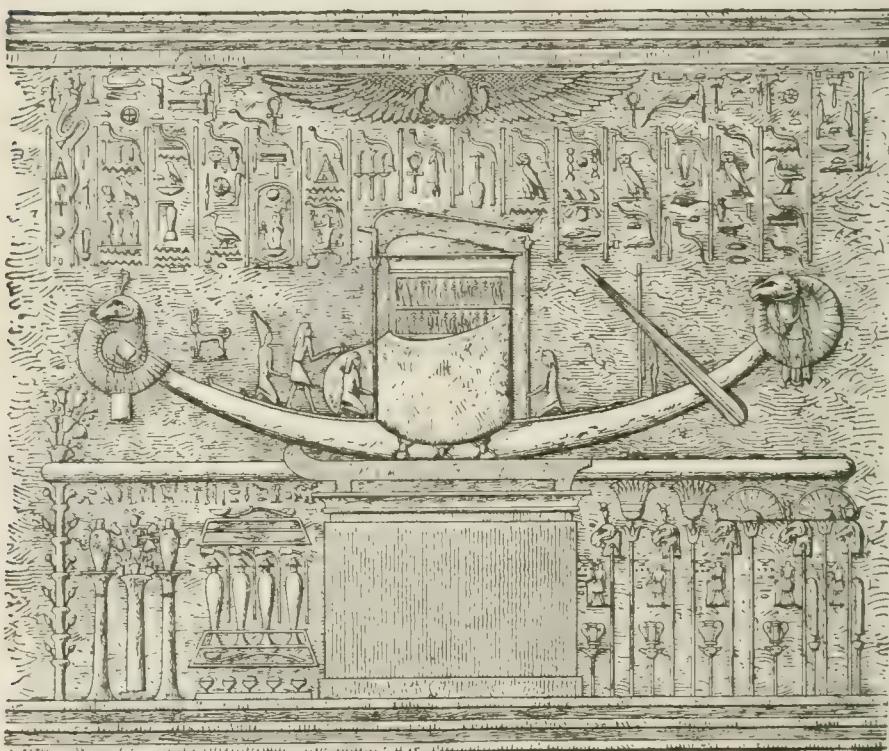
¹ Eutrop. ix. 22; Aur. Victor, *Caes.* 39. On the authority of a medal, Tillemont represents this Achilleus as reigning six years. But Diocletian was not the man to allow an insurrection to exist for so long a time if it could possibly be suppressed, and Eckhel (iv. 96) declares this medal false.

² Malalas (xii. 309) relates one of those stories so dear to the Oriental mind: Diocletian had given orders to kill until the blood should come to his horse's knees; but the horse having stumbled over a corpse, got up with his knees bloody. It was a sign sent by the gods; the Emperor comprehended it, and stopped the massacre.

³ ix. 23: . . . *Ordinavit provide multa . . . quae ad nostram aetatem manent.*

⁴ "Egypt was the headquarters of the occult sciences, to which the Chaldaeans seem to have added nothing except horoscopy and prophecy, founded on an examination of the skies" (Révillout, *Revue égyptol.* i. 147). Diocletian prohibited throughout the Empire divination by astrological diagrams, *ars mathematica damnabilis est et interdicta omnino* (*Code Just.* ix. 18, 2).

First and Second Cataracts, where they were too feeble to hinder anything. It was a movement of withdrawal; but the Empire in concentrating made itself stronger. A numerous garrison occupied the Island of Philae and intrenched themselves strongly there; another was posted on an inner line at Maximianopolis, which had been built on the ruins of Coptos. A wall, connected with the

SACRED EGYPTIAN BARQUE CARRYING A SHRINE.¹

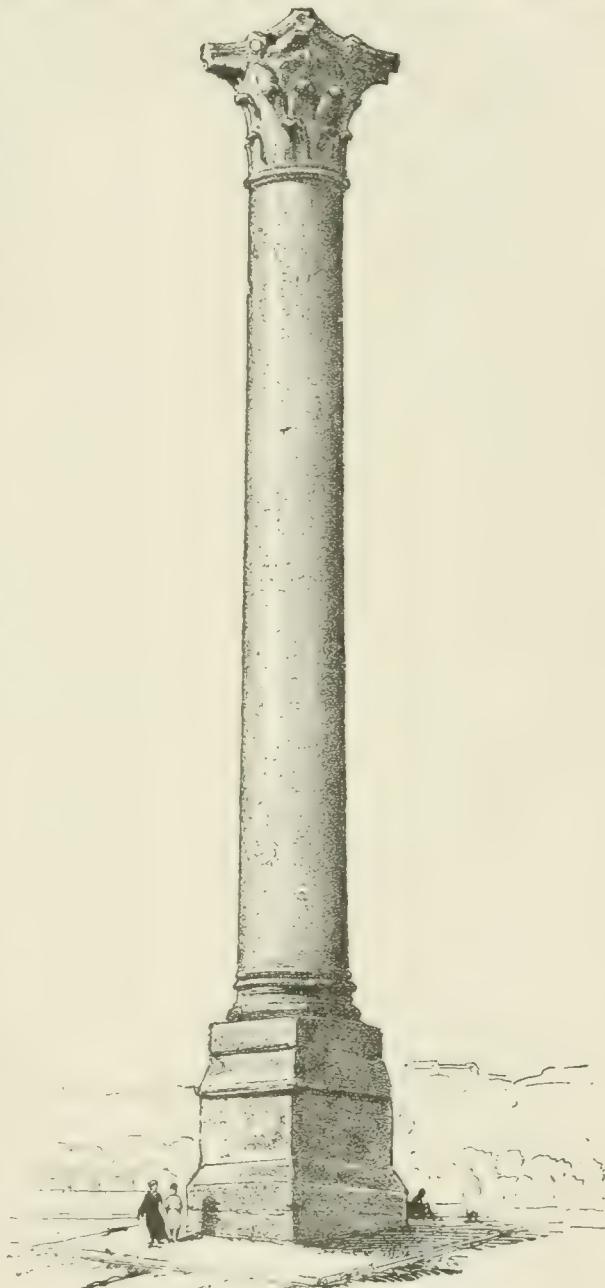
defences of the island, barred the whole valley, and remains of this wall are still to be seen. Not to neglect any means of making this frontier secure, he negotiated with the Blemmyes, who for an annual subsidy agreed no longer to molest Egyptian commerce. The agreement was consecrated by religious ceremonies in the temple of Isis. The Blemmyes were fervent worshippers of the Egyptian goddess; they claimed free access to her temple, and the renewal of the old law which authorized their priests² to

¹ Perrot's *Ancient Art*.

² Letronne, *Mémoires pour l'histoire du christianisme en Égypte*, etc., pp. 74 et seq.

come annually to the island and carry away her image, to keep it for a certain time in their country. In an inscription which appears to be of the time of the Antonines we read: "Upon the Nile I have seen the rapid vessels bringing back the sacred temples from the land of the Ethiopians." The "temple" was a coffer, usually gilded, containing a statuette of Isis. Diocletian would never have consented to let a Latin divinity make excursions after this fashion. But the Roman pontifex maximus did not concern himself with regard to the adventures of Isis; and since the Blemmyes attached importance to these pilgrimages, he deemed it wise to permit them.

Diocletian had written his name in blood on the walls of Alexandria; but he reorganized there a method of relief for the poor,¹ and the fickle-minded city saw without displeasure the prefect



POMPEY'S PILLAR AT ALEXANDRIA.

¹ It had already long existed there; see p. 220. Procopius (*Historia Arcana*, chap. xxvi.) speaks of 2,000,000 *modimni*, equal to 12,000,000 *modii*, dispensed at this time. (Cf. *Chron. of Alexandria, ad ann. 302.*)

Pompeius erect a column surmounted with the statue of Diocletian, with an inscription in honor of "the invincible Emperor." The statue has disappeared, and the column, still standing near the harbor, does not even bear the name of Diocletian, "the tutelary Genius of Alexandria;" it has long been believed a monument of him who was defeated at Pharsalia, and is called to this day "Pompey's Pillar."¹

In 294 Narses, second son of the peace-loving Bahram, had assumed in Ctesiphon the diadem of Persia. He was a warlike king, who occupied himself in re-awakening the martial ardor of his people. Diocletian was at the time in the interior of Egypt, and Galerius in Pannonia; and the Persian judged it a favorable moment to attack Armenia, whence he drove out Tiridates, and at the beginning of the year 296 crossed the Tigris with a numerous army. Narses remembered the prosperity of Sapor, and he hoped to emulate, even to excel it, and to maintain it for a longer time.² Warned by the blow struck in Armenia, Diocletian had already called into Syria the Caesar of the Oriental provinces, and himself advanced towards Palestine,—but slowly, as suited a monarch whose calm majesty was never disturbed by impetuous movements.

Did Galerius know how and why Crassus had perished? Without being unjust to him, we may doubt if he did; the defeat of Valerian, however, was recent enough to be clearly in his mind, but he took no warning from it. He crossed the Euphrates and led his legions into that plain of Carrhae where the sand but scantily concealed so many Roman bones. The scenes of former times were repeated; his cavalry could not resist the shock of the cataphracti, and his heavy infantry, overcome by heat and by thirst, blinded by the dust in the midst of the rapid squadrons sweeping around it, experienced the fate of the legionaries of Crassus. It is said that Tiridates escaped only by swimming across the Euphrates, weighed down as he was with his armor. Galerius also escaped with his life and the shattered remnant of his army. Just outside Antioch he met Diocletian, who received him with a severe countenance, and refused to let him enter the imperial chariot. Then was seen the spectacle of the haughty Caesar, clad in his purple

¹ *C. I. G.* No. 4,681.

² *Ad occupandum Orientem magnis copiis inhiabat* (*Lactantius, De Morte pers.* 9).

mantle, and with shame upon his brow, walking on foot for the space of a mile before the chariot of the angry Augustus.¹

Diocletian rapidly collected the troops from the camps on the Danube, enrolled Barbarians in the army, especially Goths,² and re-formed a Syrian army, which seems to have been very strongly constituted. He divided it into two corps: with one he took up a position on the Euphrates, to defend the fords in case of need;



A CATAPHRACTUS. FROM TRAJAN'S COLUMN.

he put Galerius at the head of the other, tracing out for him the plan of a campaign, in which the military experience of the former lieutenant of Probus is clearly shown. He directed the Caesar to take, in the favorable season, the route formerly followed by Antony across the Armenian mountains, and gave him for a guide in this country the expelled king Tiridates. At their approach the people received them gladly; provisions and information came in abundantly to the camp: the legions had all the advantages which the complicity of the inhabitants gives to an invading army. The

¹ Amm. Marcellinus, xiv. 11.

² Jordanes, 21.

Persians came to meet them on this unfavorable battle-ground; and filled with confidence by reason of their recent victory, kept so careless a watch that Galerius with two horsemen, in reconnoitring the position, was able to penetrate their very camp. By a vigorous night attack he created a panic among them, and made great slaughter. Narses, who was wounded, escaped with the

greatest difficulty; but his wives and children were captured, together with the treasure heaped up in the royal tents (297). Since Alexander's victory at Issus, six centuries before, the Oriental barbaric world had suffered no such disaster.

COIN OF NARSES.¹

At the news of this brilliant success Diocletian entered Mesopotamia and joined Galerius at Nisibis. The Caesar was eager to repeat Alexander's expedition. For the Macedonian conqueror it had not been temerity when he hurled the mass of his army upon the empire of Darius and plunged into the remote East as far as the banks of the Indus, for he had nothing to fear from the nations he left behind him. But the Romans, who had to guard, on the west and south and north, an immense frontier line always threatened, were not in a position to imitate this dangerous enterprise. Diocletian calmed the too-impetuous ardor of Galerius, and displayed towards the captives that had been taken a consideration not at all usual at that time. When Narses, won by this conduct, made overtures of peace, Diocletian received them cordially. The first condition claimed by the Romans was, however, rejected.² They wished the Persians to agree to have all their commerce with the Empire pass through Nisibis,—doubtless in order to simplify the service of the imperial custom-house, and to concentrate the relations between the two countries at a single point easily to be watched.³ Narses

¹ Silver coin of Narses, son of Bahram II. Bust of the prince and a legend signifying "the worshipper of Ormuzd, the excellent Narses, king, celestial germ of the gods."

² In the *Excerpta de legationibus*, edit. of Bonn, p. 134, are to be found curious details in respect to these negotiations, preserved to us by Peter Patricius. He lived in the time of Justinian, but was able to examine the archives. (Cf. *Fragm. Histor. Graecor.* iv. 188.)

³ These questions of import dues had so great a financial and political importance for the Empire that a schedule of duties, recently found at Palmyra (De Vogüé, session of the *Acad. des inscr.* of June 1, 1883), shows the Romans as early as the reign of Tiberius interposing in that city for the drawing up of a tariff of which they doubtless shared with the Palmyrenes the products. (Cf. *Code Just.* iv. 61, 13.) The Roman sway having crossed the

refused to agree to this, and the project was abandoned; but he admitted the Roman possession of northern Mesopotamia, whose limit on the south seemed to admit of being marked by the fortified city of Circesium, near the confluence of the Chaboras with the Euphrates, and by Singara, at the base of a mountain in an arid region, which rendered an attack difficult, and relief difficult also. Nineveh, on the Tigris, where for two centuries a Roman colony had maintained itself in some unknown way,¹ marks perhaps the eastern extremity of this line. In the upper valley of the Tigris the Persian king relinquished five Armenian provinces which had been conquered by Sapor I., and now, in the hands of Rome, would protect a part of Armenia and Asia Minor against the Persians.² Tiridates recovered his kingdom, increased by a part of Media Atropatene, and the Iberian chiefs in the basin of the Kour relinquished their allegiance to Persia and accepted the supremacy of Rome (297). This treaty was a brilliant success, worth far more than the recapture by Augustus of the standards of Crassus, for it gave the Empire as allies the nations living near the Caspian and the Caucasus, while Roman garrisons were established in the mountainous region on the north of Mesopotamia, who could arrest on its advance or defeat by a flank movement any force seeking to invade Asia Minor and Syria. The victory of Galerius and the statesmanship of Diocletian bestowed upon Roman Asia a peace that numerous fortresses, built along the

Euphrates, Diocletian desired to have Nisibis occupy the position that Palmyra had held,—that of being the desert mart between the two empires.

¹ Nineveh was still a great city in the time of Amm. Marcellinus (xviii. 6), and this author calls it the capital of Adiabene. Its inhabitants, like the Greeks of Seleucia, had doubtless a sort of municipal independence, which permitted them to incline towards whichever of the two empires seemed for the moment the more formidable. The Persians traversed it freely in 359.

² Uncertainty exists respecting the names of these five provinces, which Peter Patricius and Amm. Marcellinus (xxv. 7) give differently, — Zabdicene, Corduene, Arsacene, Intelene, and Sophene, according to the former; Zabdicene, Corduene, Arsacene, Moxoenc, and Rehimene, according to the latter. We are not able even to assign to them all a well-determined geographical position. It is enough to know that they are all north of Nineveh, in the upper basin of the Tigris and on its eastern shore, in the Kurdistan of modern times. During the reign of Julian, Corduene had for governor a Persian satrap of Roman name, Jovianus, a man secretly in sympathy with Rome (Amm. Marcellinus, xviii. 6). The occupation of Corduene by the Persians was merely *de facto*, — doubtless acquired in the reign of Constantius; for this province was expressly ceded by Jovian in the treaty of 363.

eastern frontier, maintained for forty years.¹ The Augustus had well deserved the honor of a triumph; the Senate decreed it to him, but he waited six years before celebrating it at Rome.

III.—ADMINISTRATIVE REORGANIZATION AND LEGISLATION.

It is in fable only that Minerva springs full armed from the brain of Jupiter. In history, political creations are prepared by the travail of ages, and only such are lasting.

More than one Emperor before Diocletian had felt the necessity of taking a colleague, of dividing the great administrations, even of sharing the Empire itself,² and enfeebling the praetorians; more than one had allowed himself to be called lord or god,³ and the coins of Trajan and of Antoninus Pius represent them with the radiate crown. The coins of Trajan as yet surround with the sacred nimbus, which

was later assumed by the Christian Emperors, only the head of the fabulous bird which in Egypt was believed to spring from its own ashes; but those of Antoninus give him that symbol of immortality. The nations were displeased neither at these titles nor these crowns, for the established religion made it a duty for them to adore the Emperor living, and they were accustomed to erect temples to their dead Emperors.

¹ Malalas says that the line of fortresses constructed by Diocletian extended from Egypt to Persia. See also Suidas, s. v. ἐσχατίᾳ, and Amm. Marcellinus, xxiii. 5.

² Vespasian had set the example of these divisions of provinces. In the time of Caracalla and Geta a division of the imperial authority had been under consideration. See Vol. V. p. 157, and p. 75 of the present volume.

³ Caligula had assumed to be both: Commodus had caused himself to be called god: . . . ἑκάειτο καὶ θεός (Zonaras, xii. 5). The decurions of Barcelona declared themselves *devoti numini majestatique Claudi Gothicici* (Orelli, No. 1,020). The same words were used in respect to Aurelian by one of the legions (*ibid.* No. 1,024). Medals of Aurelian and of Carus, struck during their lifetime, gave them the titles of *deus* and *dominus* (Eckhel, vii. 508–9).

⁴ Large bronze of Antoninus, representing him with his head crowned with rays and a nimbus. See W. Madden, *The Numismatic Chronicle*, xviii. 9 (1878). A cameo represents Severus also with the radiate crown, and Gallienus wore it: . . . *Radiatus saepe processit* (*Hist. Aug. Gall.* 16), and Aurelian did the same.



BRONZE OF ANTONINUS.⁴

A century and a half before Diocletian, Hadrian had made his council the principal machinery of government; and Caracalla and Gratian had separated the civil functions from the military in not permitting the presence of a senator in the army.¹ The offices of *comes*, *corrector*, and *dux* were very ancient; in the third century A.D. we find the *magister militum*; and the praetorian prefect had long been intrusted with the administration of justice and finance. The system of grants of land made to the soldiers, with the condition of military service, was an old republican institution,



COINS OF TRAJAN, REPRESENTING, ON THE REVERSE, THE PHOENIX CROWNED WITH THE NIMBUS.

— the *colonia*, preserved by Augustus, possibly regulated by Alexander Severus; and two of the dangers which were to end by destroying the Empire,—namely, the Germanization of the frontier provinces and of the army,—had begun with Augustus. Caesar had Germans in his army in Gaul, and Tacitus shows around the first Emperors and in the auxiliary corps of the legions foreigners of every race.²

A pride in titles was extremely ancient at Rome; we have seen the rigorous classification made by Augustus. From the first days of the Empire it was required to salute the senators as *clarissimi*; the knights of noble family were *illustres*, and under Marcus Aurelius the *eminentissimi* and the *perfectissimi* had privileges which lasted for three generations. A *procurator* under Commodus is called *egregius*. The *procurators* of Severus all bore this title; and from the third century, or even earlier, there was a sort of hereditary succession for the *curiales*. The nomenclature for the hierarchy was already formed.³

¹ Lampridius says of Alexander Severus (24): *Provincias legatorias praesidia plures fecit.* Borgesi (*Oeuvres*, iii. 377; v. 397 and 405) thinks that from this time forward the *praeses* had the civil administration, the *dux* the military command.

² Tac., *Ann.* i. 7; *Hist.* i. 46.

³ Dico Marco placuit eminentissimorum quidem nec non etiam perf. virorum usque ad pronepotes liberos plebeiorum poenis vel quaestionibus non subjici. A dishonorable action (*violati pudoris macula*) arrested, however, the transmission of this privilege, which Ulpian recognizes,

Language, manners, and the exigencies of defence had prepared the separation of the Roman world into two empires. Asia had repeatedly had governors who were invested with full powers,—Agrippa and C. Caesar under Augustus, Germanicus under Tiberius, Corbulo under Nero; and Marcus Aurelius, Valerian, and Carus had relinquished to a colleague half of the provinces.

The Conscript Fathers had long since ceased to have any share in the government, and all authority had been vested in the imperial officials. The revival of the Senate in the time of the Gordians and of Probus had been but the last flicker of energy in a body whence life was departing; all things were now done in the offices of the sacred palace,¹ for the reason that there was the only force which could set in motion the vast machine. Finally, the industrial corporations and the agricultural colonization had made the beginning of a profound change in the world of labor.

Dioctletian therefore did not create in all its parts a new political and social edifice; in reality he accomplished nothing more than a great administrative reform. But the republican exterior so carefully assumed by Augustus, preserved by many of the succeeding Emperors, and restored again by Carus, was thrown off; nothing now concealed the master, *el rey netto*, and the autocratic republic of Augustus appeared in its final aspect,—that of an Oriental monarchy.²

We have already spoken of the most important of the measures of Dioctletian,—the establishment of the tetrarchy. To prevent revolutions, by making the regular succession to the Empire dependent upon the choice of the living Emperor; to defeat the intrigues of the ambitious and the riots of the soldiery, by dividing the commands, the armies, and the public treasure,—such had been his theoretic conception. To carry out this theory he decided that the Empire, divided equally, should have two Augusti (one being superior to the other) and two Caesars, who, subordinate to the

decurionibus et filiis eorum (Code, ix. 41; cf. C. I. L. vol. i. No. 1,085, and vol. vi. No. 1,603). The application of these exaggerated epithets went very low. In an inscription of the time of Alexander Severus an iron mine is called *splendidissimus* (*Rer. épigr. du midi de la France*, No. 257).

¹ Hirschfeld, *Römische Verwaltungsgeschichte*. We have seen, in the reign of Hadrian and in chap. xv. sect. 3, the beginning of the slow evolution which transformed the monarchy of Augustus into an autocratic and Oriental despotism.

² Eutropius (ix. 26) says: *Imperio Romano regiae consuetudinis formam magis quam Romanæ libertatis invexit.*

Augusti during the lifetime of the latter, should be their legitimate heirs. This form of government was something new, since Diocletian made a rule of what had hitherto been only a temporary expedient, and since, instead of Emperors reigning together in Rome — where their action, not being divided, might prove conflicting — each Augustus and each Caesar had permanently his share of provinces to govern and Barbarians to hold in check.

After the division of the Empire and the imperial power, came that of the provinces.¹ The Republic had not greatly changed the frontiers of the nations: its domain had been divided only into fourteen governments; at the accession of Hadrian there were forty-five. This increase was due to the conquests of Augustus, Claudius, and Trajan, but especially to the dismemberment of the early provinces. Since the time of Vespasian, the Emperors had been aware that commands extending over regions as vast as kingdoms gave rise to ambitious desires and dangerous attempts. More than any one of his predecessors, Diocletian had been aware of this peril; and as he had divided the Empire, in order the better to defend it, so he increased the number of provincial divisions in order to rule it more successfully. At the time of his accession there were fifty-seven provinces; during his reign the number was increased to ninety-six, forming thirty-seven new governments;² — which justifies the words of Lactantius, *provinciae in frusta*

¹ Aur. Victor, 40; Lactantius, *De Morte pers.* chap. vii.: . . . *Provinciae in frusta concisa, multi praesides et plura officia singulis regionibus ac pacem jam civitatibus incubare, item rationales multi et circarii praefectorum.* In Egypt were created the provinces Aegyptus Jovia and Aegyptus Heraulia; in Moesia and in Pannonia the provinces Margensis (in honor of the victory gained by Diocletian at Margum) and Valeria (named from the Emperor's daughter); in Britain, Flavia Caesariensis (in honor of Constantius Chlorus); and many others in Asia Minor.

² The *Notitia dignitatum*, prepared about the year 400, gives 120 provinces; a list of 386 (?) comprises only 113; another, of 369 (?), gives 104. The list given by Mommsen in the *Proceedings of the Academy of Berlin* for 1862, p. 489, from a manuscript of Verona, probably dates from the year 297. It enumerates ninety-six provinces, distributed in twelve districts, as follows: 1, the East (comprising Egypt, Syria, and Mesopotamia); 2, Pontus (the northern and eastern portions of Asia Minor); 3, Asia (the western part of Asia Minor, with the islands); 4, Thrace (between the Rhodope, the lower Danube, and the sea); 5, Moesia (between the middle Danube and Thrace); 6, Pannonia (the western part of Illyricum); 7, Italy; 8, Africa; 9, Spain (with Mauretania Tingitania); 10, Viennensis (Narbonensis and Aquitania; later, the district of the Seven Provinces); 11, Gaul; 12, Britain. The memoir in which Emil Kuhn (1877) disputes the value of this document has, it is true, been justly combated by Czwalina (1881), but there still remain doubts in respect to certain provinces in the list of Verona, their formation appearing to date from the second half of the fourth century. See C. Julian, *De la Réforme provinciale attribuée à Dioclétien* (*Revue hist.* vol. xix. 2d part, pp. 331 *et seq.*).

concisae, but does not justify the fault-finding spirit which dictated them, since the measure was excellent. Diocletian grouped these ninety-six provinces into twelve *dioeceses*, or districts governed by *vicarii*, or vicegerents who had a surveillance over the consuls, *correctores*¹ and presidents or judges sent into the provinces. Two or three countries, by reason of their ancient renown,—Carthaginian Africa, Greece, and Asia,—were governed by proconsuls, who were amenable directly to the Emperor.² Thus we find, at the head, the Augusti; below them, the Caesars; lower yet, the vicarii; and lastly, the presidents. This was a political structure which seemed to be capable of resisting attacks from without, and suppressing disturbances from within. For more safety, the military order was rigorously separated from the civil, and the governors of provinces, whose promotion depended upon their services, were reduced to juridical and administrative functions.

Originally the provinces had been divided between the Senate and the Emperor; we have seen what the claims of the Conscript Fathers were in this matter as late as the reigns of Tacitus and Probus. In the new organization all the provinces were dependent upon the Emperor; and the extent of many of them being reduced, the care exercised by the governors was more thorough, justice more prompt, matters were examined at closer range, and decisions reached more quickly.³ Severe regulations established the respon-

¹ The words *dioecesis* and *corrector* were not new. The *dioecesis* was originally a financial or juridical subdivision of the province (Or-Henzen, No. 6,498; Mommsen, *Inscr. Neap.* No. 1,433). Diocletian, on the contrary, united several provinces to form a *dioecesis*. Under Caracalla we find an *electus ad corrigendum statum Italiae*. The *juridici* of Marcus Aurelius became *correctores*; under Aurelian, Tetricus was *corrector Lucaniae*. (Cf. E. Desjardins, *Revue archéol.*, 1873, 2d part, p. 67.) It has already been remarked that each supreme magistrate had his corps of subordinates (*officium*), which did not change with their chief: . . . *Officiales perpetui sunt* (Paulus, *Sent.* ii. 1, 5; cf. *Code Théod.* xi. 30, 59). They kept the official books, and could remind the judge of the statute in case he had forgotten it (*Code Théod.* xi. 40, 15).

² Bocking, *Not. dign.* i. 167, and ii. 148. Macer had said, as early as the time of Alexander Severus (*Digest*, i. 18, 1): *Praesidis nomen generale est coque et proconsules et legati Caesaris et omnes provincias regentes . . . praesides appellantur*. In the fourth century the name of *judices* prevailed,—a natural change, since the suppression of the formulary method of procedure greatly enhanced the judicial functions of the presidents. The Antonines had given currency to the idea that the principal function of a governor was to enunciate the law. The *juridici* of Italy date from Marcus Aurelius, and under Hadrian and Antoninus there had been these officers in the provinces.

³ The ordinary procedure in a civil matter, the *jure ordinario agere*, that the Republic and the Early Empire had practised, had given place gradually to the *cognitio extra ordinem*. An

sibility of these officers. "He bound them fast," says Aurelius Victor, "by the most just laws."¹

An inscription of the time of Diocletian — that of Caelius Saturninus — proves that the essentially Roman custom was still observed of causing the public servants to fill the most diverse offices, and of giving them but a short time in each. Saturninus held twenty, from the office of advocate of the treasury to that of praetorian prefect, — all of the civil order; by which we see that the rule established by Augustus, and maintained as late as the time of Severus and the Gordians, requiring service in the cavalry, was now no longer observed.² An absolute ruler likes to take his servants from every station, even the lowest. These functionaries, not being eminent by birth, consoled themselves with the pomp of titles: humble offices had become sacred magistracies, *stipendia cognitionum sacrarum aut palatii magisteria*.³ The sepa-

ordinance of 294 authorizes the presidents to appoint judges only when they themselves were absolutely prevented by other duties from fulfilling this office. The *judices pedanei*, being appointed, pronounced sentence independently of the president, who had cognizance of these affairs only upon appeal of the parties (*Code Just.* iii. 3, 2). To prevent these governors from acting in any instance without due deliberation, Diocletian forbade their revoking sentences once rendered in criminal cases, so that their negligence might become known to the Emperor if an appeal brought the case before him (*Ibid.* ix. 47, 15). Every Roman magistrate had his council, composed of men whom he called together to aid him with their advice. This duty was an onerous one; it took time and caused expense and exposed to ill-will. Diocletian forbade the presidents to compel any man's services as *assessor*; they were to be allured to this office *spe praemiorum atque honorificentia* (*Code*, i. 51, i).

¹ *Officia, vincta legibus aequissimis* (*Caes.* 39).

² L. Fabius Cilo Septimius, who was consul under Commodus and Severus (*C. I. L.* Nos. 1,408-1,410), also filled twenty different offices; but in his case the rule of military service was observed, as it was also for the father-in-law of Gordian III., Timesitheus, who made his entrance upon public life as prefect of an auxiliary cohort (*Antiquités de la ville de Lyon*, p. 162, edit. of 1857).

³ Eumenes, *Pro rest. scholis*, 5, and *C. I. L.* vol. vi. No. 1,704. We give the *cursus honorum* of Septimius and of Saturninus, who, with a century between, both arrived at the highest positions, the one by services rendered in all kinds of civil and military offices, the other without ever leaving the civil career. The two inscriptions, therefore, well indicate the difference in the times.

Inscription of Septimius (*C. I. L.* vol. vi. No. 1,408, and Wilmanns, Nos. 1,202-1,202 b):
 1. *Decemvir slitibus.* 2. *Tribun. milit. leg. XI Claudioe.* 3. *Quaest. prov. Cretae et Cyren.*
 4. *Tribun. pleb.* 5. *Leg. pro praet. prov. Narbon.* 6. *Praet. urban.* 7. *Sodalis Hadrianal.*
 8. *Leg. Aug. leg. XVI Flav. Firmae.* 9. *Procos. prov. Narbon.* 10. *Praef. aerarii militaris.*
 11. *Cos. (suff. anno 193).* 12. *Leg. Augg. pr. pr. pror. Galat.* 13. *Praepositus vexillationibus Perinthi pergentibus.* 14. *Leg. pr. pr. provinc. Ponti et Bithyn.* 15. *Duc. vexillat. per Italianum.*
 16. *Leg. pr. pr. provinc. Pannon. sup.* 17. *Cur. Minicius (porticus), R. P. Nicomedensium, Interamnium, Nartium item Graviscanorum.* 18. *Praefectus Urbi.* 19. *Cos. II (anno 204).*

Inscription of C. Caelius Saturninus (*C. I. L.* vol. vi. No. 1,705): 1. *Fisci advocatus per Italianum.* 2. *Sexagenarius studiorum adjutor.* 3. *Sexagenarius a consiliis sacris.* 4. *Ducenarius*

ration between the civil and military functions, which had begun long before this time, was so rigorously kept up by Diocletian that service in the army, already prohibited to the nobility of the Empire,¹ was now denied to the municipal aristocracy also. He closed the legions against the decurions, their sons, and all those persons who by their fortune were eligible to municipal offices.² The army was recruited even among the Barbarians, and there was an end to the military spirit among this people who by it had achieved such great things.

We shall later show in its entirety the so-called "divine hierarchy;" but we must first speak of an important innovation,—the formation of an Asiatic court crowding that dwelling which Nerva and Trajan had called "the public palace." Diocletian was an admirer of the Oriental world, its royal customs pleased him, and he copied its stately ceremonial. He replaced by vestments of silk and gold the military tunic over which his predecessors had merely thrown a scarlet mantle; upon his forehead he wore the royal diadem which Aurelian had already assumed, and his purple slippers were studded with precious stones. To the imperator, whom all men, soldiers and citizens, might freely salute, succeeded the king-god, hidden in mysterious shadow, in the depths of a palace whose approaches were guarded by a crowd of eunuchs and officers. Whoever obtained from the *magister officiorum* an imperial audience, was led thither by a master of ceremonies and introduced by the *admissionales invitatores*. Crossing the threshold guarded by thirty mutes, he fell prostrate and adored "the sacred countenance," scarcely daring to lift his eyes to this motionless and dreadful majesty.³ Those even to whom their rank gave daily admittance were subjected to this servile ceremonial.⁴

a consiliis (sacris). 5. *Magister libellorum*. 6. *Magister studiorum*. 7. *Vicarius a consiliis sacris*. 8. *Magister censuum*. 9. *Rationalis vicarius per Gallias*. 10. *Rationalis privatae*. 11. *Vicarius summae rei rationum*. 12. *Praefectus annonae Urbis*. 13. *Examinator per Italiam*. 14. *Vicarius praefectorum praetorio bis, in urbe Roma et per Mysias*. 15. *Judex sacrarum cognitionum*. 16. *Vicarius praefecturae Urbis*. 17. *comes domini nostri Constantini Victoris Augusti*. 18. *Alleictus petitu senatus inter consulares*. 19. *Praefectus praetorio*.

¹ See p. 194.

² . . . *Omnibus in fraudem civilium munerum (Code Just. xii. 34, 2)*.

³ Amm. Marellinus, xv. 5, sect. 8: *Admissionum magistrum*; Böcking, *Not. dign.* i. 237, and ii. 305. The *magister officiorum* was the supreme magistrate of the palace, and had an extensive jurisdiction over civil and military officers. His duties explain his insignia.

⁴ . . . *Quibus aditum vestri dabant ordines dignitatis; et . . . admissis qui sacros vultus*

All became sacred, the palace of the Emperor as well as his person, his words, and his acts. Never before in our European world had man so much encroached upon the honors due to divinity.

It was not for the gratification of a puerile vanity that Diocletian placed himself outside the pale of common life and condemned himself to this wearisome routine. The man who had said that the best monarch, the most prudent, the wisest, always is in danger of being sold by his courtiers,¹ did not undervalue the advantages to be derived from a free communication between the sovereign and the subject. But he believed that there would be fewer revolutions in the state when there should be more respect for the ruler; that imperial majesty would be more imposing in the twilight where he proposed to keep it; that servility in words and attitudes would guarantee in the interests of public tranquillity a servility in men's minds; that, finally, obedience would be better secured by a pomp of ceremonies and the severe forms of authority. This would have been a well-founded expectation in the case of an old dynasty, the object of public homage, or of a clergy speaking in the name of Heaven; but it was a mistake in the case of one asking from official etiquette a power that historic circumstances did not give him. Diocletian, rising from so low to so high a condition, had experience enough to know what these outside shows were worth, what a burden this sumptuous court, copied by the other Augustus and by the Caesars, would impose upon the treasury, what a deleterious effect it would exercise on the already effeminate minds of men in a time which demanded all possible effort to make them more virile. But the servility of the Asiatic races and of an Empire in its decline made him believe in the happy effects of this stately ceremonial.

Diocletian abandoned the fiction of a delegation of authority by the people to the Emperor. He had been unwilling to hold anything from the old sources of power,—the citizens, the Senate, the army; and from the authority given him by his generals he constructed a sort of divine right which he communicated freely

adoratur erant (Pan. iii. 11). See Eutrop., ix. 26. The title of *dominus* is not, however, found on the coins of Diocletian (Eckhel, viii. 14), but he allowed it to be given him: *Dominum dici passus*, says Aur. Victor (*Caes.* 39), *parentem egit*.

¹ Vopiscus, *Aur.* 43.

to his colleague and to the successors chosen by himself alone. The sovereignty was again displaced. From the forum and the curia it had passed into the camps; now it was held within the palaces.¹ The court of Diocletian was an importation from the Asiatic world of customs which certain European dynasties afterwards inherited. It created that factitious social condition in which the mind grows fine and acute, and politeness and elegance give the most charming exterior, but in which manners too often become corrupt and characters degraded, and life is made up of flatteries, of secret treasons, and of mendicancy. Under Diocletian none of these evils appeared, for the reason that he imposed upon his courtiers a respect for the law as well as for himself; but after him were opened “those voracious mouths”² whereby Constantine suffered his people to be preyed upon, and the splendors of Constantinople ruined the finances of the Empire, as later the magnificent follies of the old Bourbon monarchy exhausted the resources of France.

In presence of these innovations the ancient things languished or died. Rome ceased to be the capital of the world; nothing more came to it, and all things deserted it,—important public business, gay and animated life, barrack riots, palace tragedies. To the eye the stage remained very nearly as Augustus had constructed it. If there were no longer Emperors on the Palatine, there were still the consuls and praetors in their curule chairs, the senators under their laticlaves,—an assembly of the dead, in a city now entering upon its new rôle, that of the great museum of the world.

There was, indeed, no place for Oriental kings in a city filled with memories of the senatorial Republic and the Early Empire. The liberty of speech, the habits of familiarity with their rulers that the people had kept, would have been grave infractions of the etiquette of the new court. At the time of the conference of Milan, “Rome,” says the Panegyrist, with his customary bad taste, “Rome looked from her hill-tops, endeavoring, to catch a glimpse of her Emperors in the distance.”³ But she saw nothing

¹ The author of the *Actio gratiarum Julio* says that the comitia of Rome were now in the breast of the Emperor: . . . *in sacri pectoris comitio* (*Pan. vet. xi. 15*),—an awkward imitation of the words of Plautus in *Epidicus*, i. 2, which are at least witty: *Jam senatum convocoabo in corde consiliorum.*

² Amm. Marcellinus, xvi. 8.

³ . . . *E speculis suorum montium prospicere conata* (*Pan. vet. iii. 12*).

coming. The Augusti remained occupied with the affairs of the Empire, and, paying no attention to Rome, returned to protect the frontiers.

Diocletian had received the purple in Nicomedeia from the hands of his fellow-soldiers; he kept it without asking from the Senate a confirmation of his titles. Incessantly he made laws,—we have twelve hundred of his rescripts,—and not one of them was prepared by the assembly which had been the great council of the Empire. Up to this time the Senate had appeared to make the consular elections: it was a pure formality, but precious, nevertheless, to an easily gratified vanity. Diocletian now took the appointment of the consuls into his own hands.¹ Thus to drop the veil which hid the nothingness of the Senate's authority, was a public insult; the Conscript Fathers were justly incensed; there followed imprudent words, possibly conspiracies, certainly executions. Diocletian did not pay these senile ebullitions the honor to concern himself personally with them; he gave the matter in charge to Maximian,—well fitted for such a duty.²

The praetorian prefect, the man once called “the king's sword,” remained a person of importance; but he ceased to be dangerous. His military authority was almost suppressed by the formation

¹ A consular diptych, that of Flavius Felix, “a very illustrious man, *comes* and *magister* of the two military services, patrician and *consul ordinarius*,” who was consul of the West in 428, was long preserved entire in the abbey of Saint Junien de Limoges. There were originally two panels of this diptych, one of which was brought in 1898 to the Cabinet of Medals in Paris. The other is lost, but we know it from the publications of Mabillon, *Annales ordinis Benedictini*; of Banduri, *Imperium orientale*: of Gori, *Thesaurus veterum diptychorum*, i. 120. Ch. Lenormant has also reproduced it in the *Trésor de numism. et de glyptique*. The consular diptychs were double tablets of ivory which the consuls distributed to the senators on taking office. Justinianus, consul of the East in 521, inscribed upon his diptych:—

*Munera parva quidem pretio, sed honoribus alma,
Patribus ista meis affiro consul ego.*

Here the use of the consular diptychs is perfectly indicated. A law of the *Theodosian Code*, made in 384 under Valentinian II. and Theodosius, grants to the consuls exclusively the right of distributing these ivory diptychs: *Exceptis consulibus ordinariis nulli prorsus alteri diptycha ex chore dandi facultas sit.* See Chabouillet, *Revue des Sociétés savantes*, 5th series, vol. vi. 1873.

In this diptych the consul is represented as standing in his place in the theatre, holding the long consular sceptre, surmounted by a globe, which bears the busts of the reigning Emperors, Valentinian III. and Theodosius II. The inscription is as follows: FL[avii] FELICIS V[iri] C[larissimi] COM[itis] AC MAG[istri]. There remains only one more ancient diptych, that of Probus, consul in 406, under Honorius.

² Laetantius, *De Morte pers.* 8: . . . *Non deerant locupletissimi senatores qui suburnatis indiciis affectasse imperium dicerentur* (Aur. Victor, 39).

of four distinct armies; by the regular and no longer accidental appointment of *magistri militum*, who left the prefect only the care of the commissariat and the pay;¹ lastly, by the suppression of the corps of *frumentarii*, which had given him absolute power over the lives and fortunes of the principal men of the provinces. In the Early Empire it had not been considered wise to multiply the administrative *personnel*; and yet many functionaries were necessary for the conduct of public affairs, and particularly for the maintenance of public order, which, necessary in every civilized country, is pre-eminently so in a monarchical country. The army fulfilled this duty. From the first days of the Empire it had furnished officers to watch over the interests of Rome in the free cities (for instance, Byzantium), or among turbulent allies like the Batavi and the Moors; later it furnished soldiers and centurions who were retained at Rome, *frumentarii*, under the authority of the praetorian prefect. After being trained for their new trade, they were sent into the provinces to see and hear, and afterwards tell what they had ascertained. By their reports the *frumentarii* often gave cause for accusations even against the governors of provinces.² Hence their odious reputation, and the joy caused by their suppression. With his new officials, Diocletian had no longer need of this vast system of espionage which had given the praetorian prefects so formidable a weapon.³ He attached so much importance to having it known that all could rely upon the justice of the Emperor that, in the

¹ Under Constantine, who made them exclusively civil functionaries, there were four praetorian prefects; the opinion of Zosimus (ii. 32) seems most correct, that there were but two under Diocletian, as there were but two Augusti. The prefect Asclepiodotus, who aided Constantius against Allectus, was probably Maximian's praetorian prefect, and still held the early military position attached to this office. As to the *magistri*, we read of them from time to time during the third century; thus Aurelian, under Valerian and Claudius, held the *militiae magisterium*, either for command or inspection of camps and fortresses (*Hist. Aug.*, *Aur.* 9, 11, and 17). A function like this was too useful for Diocletian not to have made it a permanent position (Lactantius, *De Morte pers.* 7). What the duties were, we do not know; it was doubtless a great service of inspection and command, which received from Constantine its definite form when he instituted two *magistri militum*, one for the infantry, the other for the cavalry.

² M. L. Renier has thus explained the character of the *frumentarii*, contrary to the opinion which represented them as officers employed in the commissariat. We know that centurions were employed in mines and quarries as superintendents of the works. With the Romans the army was useful for all purposes.

³ Constantine re-established this police service, intrusting it to *agentes in rebus*.

rescript entitled, "Concerning those who, through fear of the judge, have not dared to appeal," he says: "If thou hast not appealed from the sentence pronounced against thee, it is because thou hast accepted it; for in our sacred court thou hadst nothing to fear."¹

As for the praetorians, their number was gradually diminished by sending malecontents into the legions; and the haughty band which had made and unmade so many Emperors, fell without resistance to the condition of a guard of city watch, as this Senate, which had governed the world, was reduced to being only the municipal council of Rome. And thus the two ancient powers, so long enemies, perished together. The strength of the urban cohorts, who were under the command of the prefect of the city, was also reduced.²

The Augusti substituted for their body-guard of praetorians two battalions levied in the Illyrian provinces. These soldiers took the names of the Emperors, being called the Jovian and the Herculean, and, proud of being fellow-countrymen of their masters, they exhibited towards them absolute fidelity.³

The Dalmatian who cared so little about the people whom his predecessors had courted, desired, however, to have the Romans see in their own city a monument of his ostentation; he caused to be built on the Viminal, with disdainful magnificence, baths more extensive than those of Titus and of Caracalla.⁴

¹ *Codex Just.* vii. 67, 1.

² *Imminuto praetoriarum cohortium atque in armis vulgi numero* (*Aur. Victor, Caes.* 39; *Lactantius, De Morte pers.* 13). After his victory over Maxentius, Constantine suppressed the praetorians, whose name thenceforward is lost to history. From the middle of the third century the Emperors, always absent from Rome, and always distrustful of the praetorians, had given themselves a private guard, composed of two corps, infantry and cavalry, who were called *domestici* and *prolectores*.

³ *Zosimus*, iii. 30. In respect to what may be called the line, Diocletian doubtless began that dismemberment of the legions which Constantine systematically continued. In the time of Hyginus the legion was still composed of six thousand men; but Diocletian, having constructed many castles and fortresses along the line of the frontiers, wished, no doubt, to have them guarded by small bodies of troops, which should have, nevertheless, their complement both of men and munitions. For this service the legion was too numerous, and it became necessary to reduce it. From his reign on, the word *schola* takes the signification of "a detachment of soldiers," — a sense in which we find it both in the *Code* and in *Amm. Marcellinus*. It would seem that Hyginus wrote his book *Dv. Munitiobus castrorum* in the beginning of the third century; it is therefore useless to us for the period of the tetrarchy. The treatise of Vegetius, *Epitome rei militaris*, composed between 384 and 395, does not distinguish dates, and hence throws no light upon the military organization of Diocletian. Later we shall see that of Constantine.

⁴ Many other buildings were erected by Diocletian at Rome, at Antioch (*Malala*, xii).

Rome was now but an ordinary city, Italy but a province. Up to this time she had been required to furnish only the provisions necessary for the palace and for the troops stationed in the capital or in the peninsula (*Italia annonaria*). Diocletian subjected her to the land-tax, which since the time of Augustus she had never paid. He thus effaced a privilege offensive to the rest of the Empire rather than created any considerable financial advantage, for the tax was moderate at first. The country adjacent to Rome, as far as a hundred miles from the walls (*urbicaria regio*), remained exempt from the contributions to which the rest of annonyary Italy was subjected.¹

The *consilium*, already reconstructed by Hadrian, became the *consistorium sacrum*, — a sort of council of state, composed of the principal persons of the Empire, and filling in the administration the place vacated by the Senate. It deliberated in the presence of the Emperor upon subjects which he laid before it;² it assisted him in the exercise of his judicial functions; and a part or all of the members accompanied him on his journeys and formed part of his court at Nicomedea, Antioch, and Sirmium. Finally, we see that he made a reform in the general maintenance of order throughout the Empire.

We mention, in passing, the completion of the judicial evolution which had been going on since the beginning of the Empire,— the *cognitio extra ordinem*, substituted for the formulary procedure; in criminal cases the *inquisitio*, or information, formerly the part of the accuser, now made officially by the magistrate; in civil cases the twofold prosecution, first before the *praetor* (*in jure*), and then before the judge (*in judicio*), replaced by the single suit before the judge, a state functionary.³ The judicial system of the Republic,

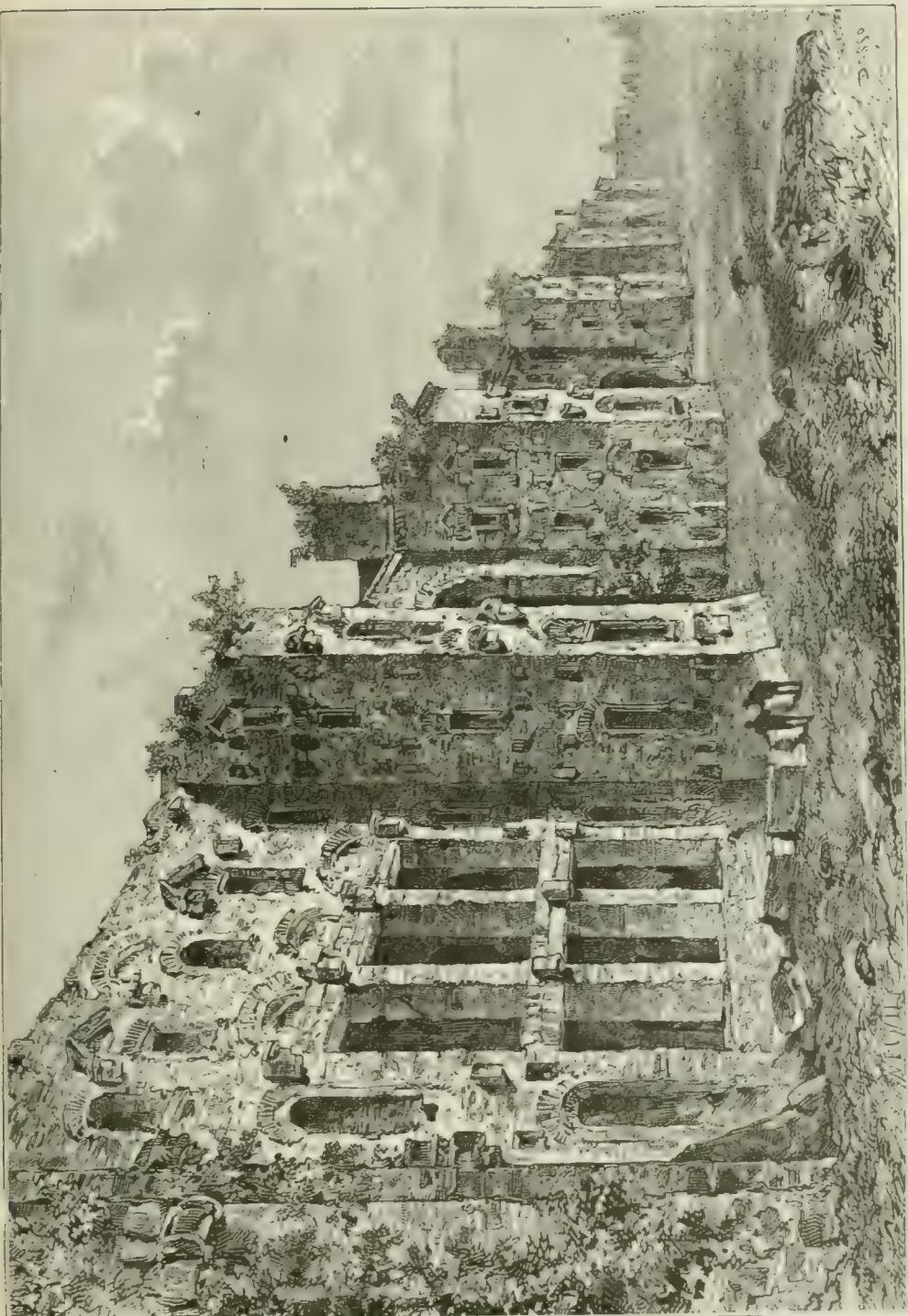
306), at Nicomedea, etc. (Cf. Orelli, Nos. 1,047, 1,052, 1,054, 1,055, 1,056, etc., and Lactantius, *De Morte pers.* 7.) An inscription very recently discovered, shows an African city, which the rebels had destroyed, rebuilt by Diocletian and Maximian.

¹ Aur. Victor, 39. Cf. Lactantius, *De Morte pers.* 23.

² Imp. *Dincl. et Maxim. A.A.*, in consistorio dixerunt (Code, ix. 47, 12). The members of the council received as salary 60,000, 100,000, and 200,000 sesterces, as we know from the inscription of Saturninus.

³ The *praetor* had the *jurisdictio*; that is to say, the right to grant or refuse an action. The action being allowed, he named judges, who were specially appointed for each case. These judges had the *cognitio*, or first inquiry, and could be readily challenged and set aside. When they were not selected exclusively from one of the great political bodies (as they were in the last century of the Republic), citizens possessed guarantees against the interested

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which Augustus had preserved, was entirely unsuited to the new imperial monarchy. Formerly the magistrate did not intervene in the case except by the *judicis datum*: henceforth he was to concern himself with it at every stage; and the judges being, as public functionaries, the delegates of the Emperor, the sovereign might revise their sentences, either directly or by the *vice sacra judicantes*, making in his name a second trial, whose decisions he would accept or reverse. All civil and criminal justice thus came to be in the Emperor's own hands; and thence it followed that when the venality of the last century of the Republic reappeared in the Later Empire, justice, as well as the administration, was polluted by it, the two being then blended.¹

The municipal law of Caesar had ordered for Italy a quinquennial census. To accomplish this for the entire Empire was difficult; accordingly, in the time of Ulpian it took place only every ten years. The minute description that Ulpian has left us of it proves what scrupulous care the Romans employed in making an equitable apportionment of the taxes.² At the expiration of each decennial period a new valuation of land was made, on the declaration of the owners, subject to correction by the *censitor*. Lactantius speaks of this necessary revision in terms of alarm which have misled later writers. It has been thought that Lactantius revealed outrageous exactions, begun by Diocletian and continued by Galerius;³ when in reality this measure was nothing more than one of the most ancient customs of the imperial administration. Diocletian, who multiplied offices and lined all the frontiers with defensive works, must have been obliged to create means for so

sentences of magistrates and against arbitrary action on the part of government. The law of Diocletian, which is of the year 294, is found in the *Code of Justinian*, iii. 3, 2.

¹ In respect to this change, see above, p. 386, note 2, and Puebla, *Instit.* vol. ii. p. 261, sect. 182; Walter, sect. 743; Bethmann-Hollweg, iii. 104; and Cuq, *Le Magister sacrarum cognitionum*, or chief of the department where was made the preliminary investigation of matters submitted to the Emperor. The right of appeal to the sovereign had since the time of Augustus modified the judicial organization of the Republic. The reorganization of the imperial council by Hadrian, who made it into a supreme court of judicature, had prepared the way for the reform accomplished by Diocletian. The Emperor was at that time the source of all justice.

² *Digest*, l. 15, 4.

³ *Agri glibatim metiebantur; vites et arbores numerabantur: animalia omnis generis scri-
bebantur: hominum capita notabantur (De Morte pers.* 23). The *Theodosian Code* (ix. 42, 7) shows the regularity of the work which was done in the time of Augustus and before him:
... *Quod spatium et quod sit ruris ingenium: quid aut cultum sit aut colatur: quid in vineis,
olivis, aratoriis, pascuis, silvis fueri inventum.*

many expenses. Taxes certainly were increased; perhaps it was he who made general the tax of twelve and a half per cent formerly levied on articles of luxury¹ alone; and if he abolished the tax of the twentieth on inheritances and on enfranchisements, of which we find no trace after his time,² he increased that of one per cent upon sales, which is later mentioned as a very heavy burden.³ But the re-establishment of order and industry prevented the weight of public expenses from being very much felt; Aurelius Victor has already shown us that under Diocletian they were easily borne.

A document recently discovered attributes to this Emperor a curious simplification in the administration of the finances.⁴

Like Augustus, he divided the lands into various categories,—vineyards, olive-yards (two classes), corn-lands (three classes), and grass-lands, which were taxed in proportion to their supposed productiveness. To render the collection more easy, he formed a taxable unit, *jugum* or *caput*, including lands of different character and unequal extent, which having, taken together, the same value, 100,000 sesterces or 1,000 aurei (\$3,000), owed the state an equal sum.⁵ Thus five *jugera* of vineyards, or twenty *jugera* of arable land of the first quality, made a *caput*. Forty *jugera* of the second quality, or sixty of the third, 225 olive-trees in full bearing, or 450 mountain olive-trees (*in monte*) were required to constitute a like taxable unit. The *jugum* or the *caput* was therefore not a mathematical, but a taxable unit.⁶ Every financial

¹ *Code Just.* iv. 61, 7: . . . *Octavas* more solito *constitutas*, under Gratian. We have seen Diocletian much occupied during the negotiations with Persia by the question of the *portorium*. The enormous duties paid at Palmyra (above, p. 380, note 3) show that the tax of 12½ per cent could not have been a *maximum* established only in certain places.

² An inscription of Gruter does indeed place, under Valens, a *procurator XX hered.*; but this inscription is doubly suspicious, both by the manner in which it is composed, and from the writer, Panvinio, who gives it. Orelli (i. 59) says of him: *Dubia omnino haud raro ejus est fides.*

³ Cassiodorus, *Variarum*, iv. 19.

⁴ The *Syrisches Rechtsbuch*, published by Bruns in 1880.

⁵ *Nov. Major.* vii. 16; *Nov. Valent.* iii. 5, sect. 4; Cassiodorus, *Variarum*, ii. 37. The taxable unit had not everywhere the same name, nor, perhaps, the same extent. In Africa it was the *centuria*; in Italy the *millena*; and it is said in the *Theodosian Code* (xi. 20, 6): . . . *Sive quo alio nomine nunenpantur.*

⁶ Mommsen, *ap. Hermes*, iii. 430, and Marquardt. ii. 219. Every proprietor declared personally to the imperial officer (*consitor*), — in the presence of the other tax-payers, who were interested in his declaration (*professio*) being truthful, — the amount of his fortune, as is done

district comprised a certain number of them, and this number determined the amount due from the whole district. According to the needs of the government, the sum of the whole tax was raised or lowered (*indicebat*, whence *indiction*), as in the modern world percentages are added or taken off. When government consented to make a reduction in the case of a proprietor or of a city, the number of *capita* were diminished which were ascribed to the city or the man in the registers of the census.¹ Hence the request inspired by the classic souvenir of the labors of Hercules: "Regard us as Geryones, and the tribute, the monster; that I may live, cut off three heads."²

The sum imposed by the state upon the financial district was made known to the decurions of the city, who apportioned the tax among the *possessores*, collected it, and gave over to the agents of the treasury the sum demanded by the Emperor. If there was any deficit, it was made good from the property of the decurions; that is to say, they were held responsible for the tax.³ Citizens are always so held, since deficits can be made up only by them; but among the moderns it is the entire mass of tax-payers who make the sum complete. Under the Empire it was a particular class, and the responsibility at last proved fatal to it.

Notwithstanding these precautions, the taxes did not always in England in the case of the income-tax. *Omnia ipse, qui defert, aestimet* (*Digest*, l. 15, 4). If his statement were doubted, he might be required to prove it, and a false declaration was punished by confiscation. This was the law (*Codex Theod.* vi. 2, 2) in the case of senators, and doubtless it applied equally to those of lower rank. The census, originally quinquennial, later decennial, appears to have been made, after 312, at intervals of fifteen years, which gave origin to the method of reckoning time by *indictions*.

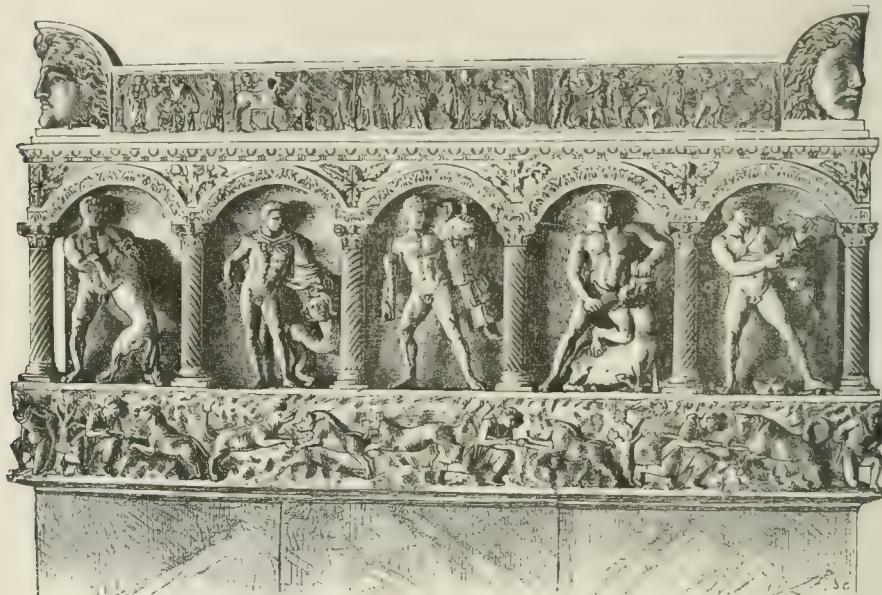
¹ Thus the territory of Autun contained 32,000 *jugera*, which Constantine reduced to 25,000 (*Pam.* v. viii. 11). Julian diminished in Gaul the tax for each *caput* from 15 to 7 *aurei* (Amm. Marcellinus, xvi. 5, 14). The *Theodosian Code* (vi. 20, 6) speaks of *capita relevata vel aducata levius*. The basis of the *caput* served even in the matter of furnishing supplies by the *possessores*: in Thrace, twenty *capita*; in Scythia and Moesia, thirty; in Egypt, in the East, in Asia, and Pontus, thirty-three (?) collectively are required to furnish a military garment (*Hist. Aug.*, *Gordian III.* 28, i. and *Theodosian Code*, vii. 6, 3).

² *Geryones nos esse puto monstrumque tributum :*
Hic capita, ut vivam, tu mali tolle tria.

SID. APOLLIN., *Carm.* xiii. 19.

³ . . . *Decaproti et icosaproti . . . pro omnibus defunctorum fiscalia detimenta resarcunt* (*Digest*, l. 4, i. sect. 1; 3, sect. 10; 18, sect. 26). The latter law (18, sections 1-30) should be read in all its details in order to understand the extent of the *munera civilia*. The lists of the apportionment were preserved in the *tabularium* of each city by the *tabularii civitatum* (*Theodosian Code*, xi. 28, 3); several of these are in existence: for example, that of the Volceii, in the country of the Lucanians, for the year 323 (Mommesen, *Inscr. Neap.* No. 216).

come in readily, for the reason that, the Romans obtaining their principal public revenue from real estate, crushing burdens were laid upon it. Accordingly, there were insolvent *possessores*, ruined *curiales*,¹ proprietors who, when about to sell their land, had kept back the payment of the arrears with which the property was

LABORS OF HERCULES.²

burdened, and thus escaped paying it,—a dead loss to the treasury, since they possessed nothing else with which to answer for their debt.³ Thus arrears accumulated (*reliqua*), for recovery of which the advocate of the treasury instituted proceedings, usually upon information given by a *delator*, whose trade was encouraged

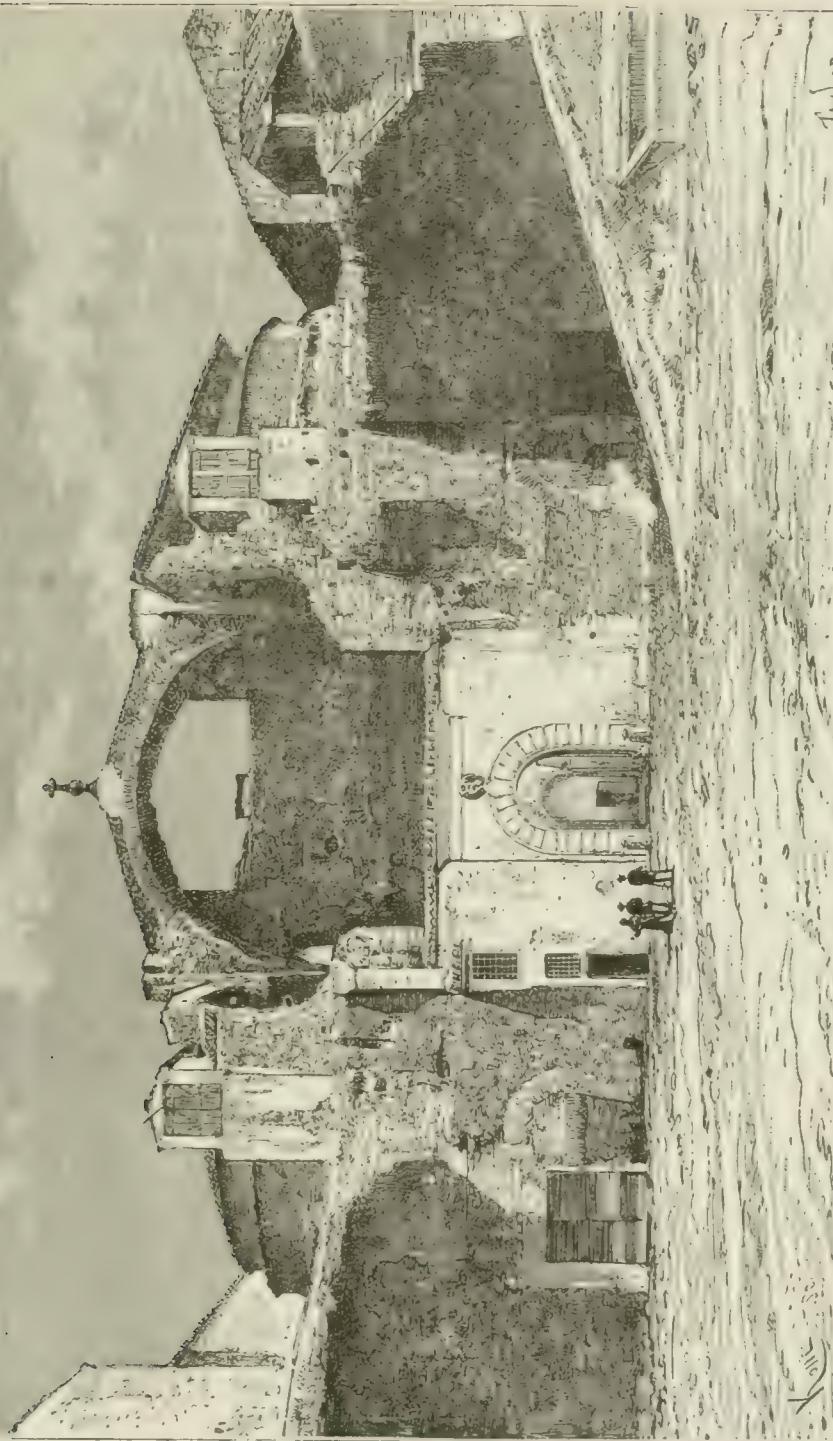
¹ The *curiales* were doubly responsible,—first, towards the state, as members of the committee of ten or of twenty (*decemprimi, decaproti, icosaproti*), or simply as *curiales* required to collect the tax (Papinian, in the *Digest*, l. i. 17, sect. 7); second, towards the city as magistrates (Ulpian in the *Digest*, l. 2, 2, sect. 8). In both cases their fortunes were at stake; and it so often happened that the *curiales* became impoverished in the public service that a law was made rendering the city responsible, in such cases, for their support (*Digest*, l. 2, 8).

² Bas-relief from a sarcophagus of the Borghesi Villa. Under the principal design is represented the chase of the leopard, the wild boar, and the wild bull. Upon another side of the same sarcophagus appear other exploits of Hercules and similar hunting-scenes. In Vol. V. facing p. 566, is represented another sarcophagus, a so-called cinerary urn, having bas-reliefs of the same kind.

³ Constantine renewed in 319 (*Theodosian Code*, xi. 3, 1) the prohibition long ago made against bargains of this kind (*Digest*, l. 15, 5).

RUINS OF THE BATHS OF DIOCLETIAN. ENTRANCE TO THE CHURCH OF S. MARIA DEI ANGELI

Major.



by a premium of a fourth part of the sums recovered (*quadruplicator*). From time to time policy dictated to the Emperor the relinquishment of these arrears.

This was done by Domitian, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus, Marcus Aurelius, and Aurelian, and later by Constantine.¹ There is no mention in any document of a like measure adopted by Diocletian; but the relief granted by Constantine in 310 embraces only the *reliqua* of the five years preceding,²—which gives ground to suppose that his great predecessor had left none.

Diocletian confirmed all the privileges which had been accorded in preceding reigns to the decurions,³ and also the authority of the municipal laws, which the governors were required to respect;⁴ he even exempted from the capitation tax the artisans in cities (*plebs urbana*) for the small landed possessions they might hold in the country.⁵ But anxious, like his predecessors, to secure the performance of all public duties in the cities, he took care not to let the *possessores* withdraw from municipal duties,⁶ while making

¹ Hadrian remitted about \$40,000,000.

² *Paneg. vet.* viii. 13.

³ *Codex Theod.* ix. 41, 11, and 47, 12; x. 31, 4, and 42, 3.

⁴ *Ibid.* viii. 49, 1; xi. 29, 4.

⁵ *Ibid.* xiii. 10, 2. The words of this rescript, addressed to the presidents of Lycia and Pamphylia, *sicut in orientalibus provinciis observatur*, show that the immunity granted by Diocletian had been abolished in the provinces of Galerius (Lactantius, 23). In 313 Constantine and Licinius re-established it throughout the entire Empire.

⁶ Engraved stone; Caylus, vol. v. pl. 83, 6.

⁷ *Codex Theod.* x. 41, 6–10.



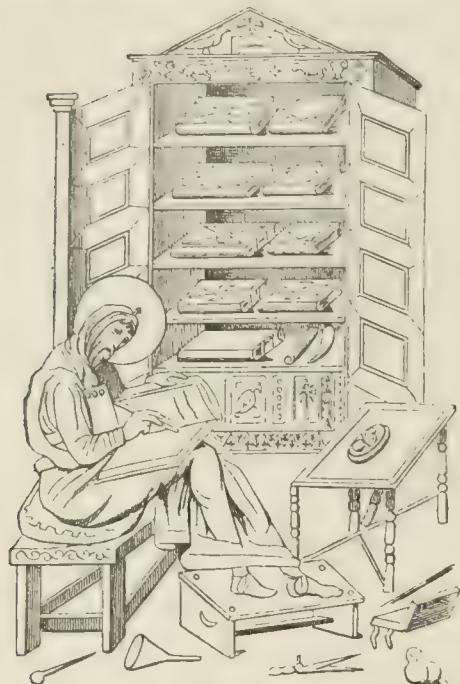
SMALL TRADES: A CUTLER'S SHOP.
FROM A BAS-RELIEF.



FIELD-LABORERS SURROUNDING
A PLOUGHSHARE.⁶

the obligation of the *munera personalia* cease for them at the age of fifty-five.¹

That he never accorded exemption from the capitation tax to the rural population, was due to the fact that this favor would have been profitable only to the great land-owners, who were responsible to the treasury for their *coloni*;² the peasants therefore remained subject to the capitation, to the *annona*, and to the compulsory labor and the furnishing of extra supplies. But the ordinance *Ne rusticani, ad ullum obsequium devocentur*,³ protected them against all other dues or taxes; and when the cities made an attempt to throw off upon the country the superindictions, under pretence that they were tributes *extra ordinem*, he established distinctly that these were to be paid by the *possessores*.⁵ Finally, by another ordinance he declared that the colonist who had fulfilled the terms of his contract should not be held responsible for the debts of his landlord.⁶ We have seen the formation of a new social condition,—that of the colonist; we now see another



LIBRARY OF THE LATER EMPIRE.⁴



CHANGER OR VERIFIER OF MONEY.
FROM A PAINTED GLASS.

division made among the inhabitants of the Empire,—the *urbani*,

¹ *Codex Theod.* 49, 3. The exemption was valid only *si inopia civium non est* (*ibid.* 2).

² *Ibid.* XI. i. 4.

³ *Ibid.* xi. 54, 1; an ordinance undated, but signed with the names of Diocletian and Maximian.

⁵ *Ibid.* x. 41, 10: . . . *Quandoquidem ea patrimonii munera esse constet.*

⁶ *Ibid.* iv. 10, 3, anno 286.

⁴ From Garrucci, *Storia dell' arte crist.*

exempt from capitation; the *rusticani*, who pay it. These divisions announce the approach of the mediaeval period.—the time, that is to say, of inequality and rural distress.

In abolishing the capitation-tax for the *plebs urbana*, Diocletian favored the lesser industries. He attempted to assist legitimate traffic by two other measures, the one excellent, the other bad,—a monetary reform which Constantine was later to complete, and the establishment of a maximum price for articles of daily use. We have seen what evils were caused by the monetary crisis of the second half of the third century. With the idea that to give to a piece of metal any desired value, it sufficed to engrave the Emperor's name upon it, the Roman government had ended by putting in circulation gold pieces and silver pieces which contained neither gold nor silver. But when the buyer offered to a dealer, in exchange for what the latter had to sell, a piece of copper coated with tin, it was natural that the trader should require, before parting with his merchandise, a large amount of this copper, whatever might be the designation which the authorities had attached to the piece. Very high prices resulted, therefore, from the depreciation of the currency, and the whole state was disturbed by a false economic idea. Diocletian quickly saw the cause of this evil; but he thought he could remedy it by an act of supreme power. "All men know," he says in the preface to his edict, "that articles of traffic and objects of daily use have attained exorbitant prices, four or eight times their true value, or even more than that; so that, through the avarice of monopolists, the provisioning of our armies becomes impossible. We have therefore determined to fix, not the price of these articles, which would be unjust, but the amount which in each case they will not be allowed to exceed." Many fragments of this edict remain to us; the following are some of the items:—

Rye (per bushel)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	\$1.50
Oats	"	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	0.82
Common wine (per quart)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	0.20
" oil	"	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	0.30
Pork (per lb.)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	0.20
Beef	"	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	0.20
Mutton and goat's flesh (per lb.)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	0.13
Lard, first quality	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	0.26

A pair of chickens		\$0.72
,, ducks		0.48
A hare		1.78
A rabbit		2.48
Oysters (a hundred)		1.20
Eggs		1.20
Field-laborer's wages (and food) a day		0.30
Mason or carpenter's wages (and food) a day		0.60
House-painter's		0.89
Decorative painter's		1.78
Shepherd's		0.24
Barber's (per person)		0. 2½
Reading-master's (per month, one pupil)		0.60
Arithmetic		0.90
Writing		0.60
Grammar		2.40
To the rhetorician or sophist		2.98
,, lawyer for an inquiry		2.40
,, lawyer for obtaining a judgment		11.92
,, bath attendant (per bather)		0. 2½
Nailless shoes of muleteer or peasant		1.43
Horse's bridle, with bit		1.20
An oilskin		1.20
Hire of an oilskin (per day)		0. 2½
Pack-saddle for a mule or camel		4.16
,, , an ass		2.98
Woman's boxwood comb		17.0

"As a whole, these prices differ but little from city prices in our own time; the dearness of common wine is perhaps the thing most noteworthy, the more so since wine was abundant in all the provinces of the Empire,—possibly it paid to the treasury a high tax, comprised in the duty on sales."¹

We have no right to reproach Diocletian severely for the economic fault he committed, for fifteen centuries later the Convention in France again established by law a maximum of prices. The event showed the Emperor that no human will could prevail in matters like these against the force of circumstances. The dealers, required to sell at a lower price than they had paid, concealed their commodities; scarcity increased; street-brawls followed, in which blood was shed; and it became necessary to let the law drop into disuse.²

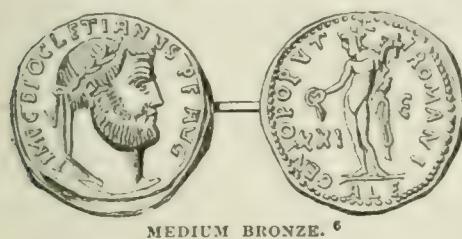
¹ Waddington, *Édit de Dioclétien, établissant le maximum dans l'empire romain*, p. 6.

² Laetantius, 7. The edict *De Pretiis* is of the year 301.

But that which the edict could not effect by order, the monetary reform, which took place between 296 and 301, slowly effected. Diocletian coined *argentei*, of which ninety-six were made to the pound, their weight averaging 3.40 gr.¹ and *aurei* sixty to the pound, weighing therefore 5.42 gr., which gave them an intrinsic value of about \$3.41;² lastly, *denarii* of copper, or *folles*, worth $\frac{1}{288}$ th of an *aureus*, or about a cent and a quarter.³ This last figure is unfortunately uncertain;⁴ it is therefore proper

to exercise discretion in respect to the view we have just given,

wherein values are stated on the scale of the worth of the copper *denarius*. But if this list does not give veritable prices, it is at least interesting, as it shows relative values existing between different commodities and in the re-



MEDIUM BRONZE.⁵

muneration of services. As to the effect produced by the monetary

¹ They were called *millarii* ($\mu\tau\lambda\alpha\rho\gamma\eta\sigma\iota\omega$), because it took a thousand of them to equal in value a pound of gold, — which shows us that at this time silver was to gold as 1 to 11.

² We have seen that Julius Caesar made 40 *aurei* from the pound of bullion; Constantine made 72, each weighing 4.55 gr. This piece, called *solidus*, was not again changed until the fall of the Byzantine Empire. An ordinance of the year 367 gave 72 *aurei* to the pound; one of the year 325 (*Codex Theod.* xii. 7, 1) says there shall be 7 *solidi* to the ounce of gold, or 84 to the pound (*uncia* = $\frac{1}{12}$ of the *libra*): but it was long ago proposed to read in this text *sex* instead of *septem*. A kilogram of pure gold being worth to-day \$42.06, a Roman pound of 327 grammes of gold represents about \$211.20, which gives the *solidus* an intrinsic value of a little over \$2.88. Like the *aureus*, the *solidus* always bore the effigy of the reigning emperor; and this usage still lasts. Procopius (*Bell. Got.* iii. 33) says that a piece of gold bearing any other than the Emperor's head would not be received in trade, nor even have currency among the Barbarians.

³ In reckoning, the *folis*, or purse, represented 125 *millarii*, or two purses were equivalent to the ancient *sestertium* (1,000 sesterces). Throughout the Levant men still compute by purses, and the purse is equal to \$22.08.

⁴ DIOCLETIANVS AVGV., laurelled head. F[elix] ADVENT[us] AVGG. NN.; Africa holding a standard and an elephant's tusk.

⁵ Mommsen reckons the *folis* equal to two cents, while Waddington considers it as little over one cent. By weight and chemical analysis we are able to determine exactly what quantity of pure metal is found in a coin, and what is the present value of the metal. But it is almost impossible for us to know its relative value in antiquity; that is to say, what debt could be paid, or what merchandise purchased, with such a coin. Another thing disturbs our calculations, — the interest in those days was twelve per cent, sometimes in business twenty-four per cent; the rate at which in prosperous times the banker Jucundus of Pompeii lent money.

⁶ IMP. C. DIOCLETIANVS P. F. AVGV., laurelled head. On the reverse: GENIO POPVL ROMANI ALE; Genius of the Roman people.



MEDIUM BRONZE.⁴

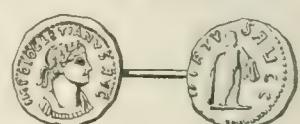
reform, it was inevitable; as the circulation of good money increased, prices fell back to their natural level.

We have already called attention to the legislative activity of

ARGENTEUS.¹

Diocletian. The *Codes* have preserved twelve hundred of his rescripts. Most of these are administrative ordinances, established to regulate the movements of the great machine which he had set at work. Those which concern civil legislation are often merely the repetition of earlier provisions;

but to revive good measures and to restore legal force to them, is a merit in itself. In these acts elevated sentiments bear sway, and that spirit of justice which marked the decisions of the Antonines. Diocletian will not allow the child to refuse support to those who gave him life; the son to be called to testify against the father, the slave against his master, brother against brother, a ward against his guardian. A father complained that his son had plotted against him. "You have the right to demand justice," the Emperor said, "if the sentiments that you ought to feel for your son do not restrain you;"² and he declares that a son can neither be sold nor given in pledge by his father.³



COIN OF DIOCLETIAN.

He repeats that the tenant (*colonus*) is not liable for the debts of his landlord,⁴ and charges the judges to remind advocates of the law,⁵ and even to supply what may be lacking in the pleas, *si quid minus fuerit dictum*.

Like Ulpian, he disapproved of the use of torture, and would have the judge resort to this means of obtaining the truth only after everything else had been tried;⁶ and though he calls mathe-matics applied to astrology a damnable art, he declared geometers useful servants of the state.⁷ His justice was alike for all; he repulsed the solicitations made to his superior authority by those who sought to free themselves from a legal obligation. "We are

¹ *Argenteus* of Diocletian, marked with the legal number XCVI. within a wreath.

² *Codex Just.* viii. 47, 5; *ibid.* iv. 20, 6; *ibid.* ix. 1, 13; *ibid.* ix. 1, 17: *Iniquum et longe a seculi nostri beatitudine esse credimus*; *ibid.* ix. 1, 14.

³ *Ibid.* iv. 43, 1 and 2.

⁴ *Ibid.* iv. 10.

⁵ *Ibid.* ii. 11, 1, under the heading: *Ut quae desunt advocatis paritum iudex suppleat.*

⁶ *Ibid.* ix. 41, 8: *Hac ratione universi provinciales nostri fructum ingenitae nobis benevolentiae consequentur.*

⁷ *Ibid.* ix. 18, 2.

not accustomed," he wrote, "to grant one man an advantage which may be harmful to others."¹ And on another occasion: "An imperial rescript cannot undo that which has been done according to the law."²

Under this Emperor, who had spent so large a part of his life in camps, the soldier was not allowed to urge his claims with arrogance. To unreasonable demands made from the army, Diocletian answered: "This is not befitting the gravity of the soldier."³ On soldiers claiming the right to retain as slaves Roman citizens who had fallen into the hands of the enemy, and whom they had recaptured: "The captives," Diocletian wrote, "will be restored to all their former rights; for they have not been taken, but recovered. Our soldiers are not their masters, they are their defenders."⁴

The preambles to his edicts are highly moral. One reproaches men with their avarice; another recalls to mind that it is the gods who have given Rome her prosperity, and that they will preserve it only so long as the Romans lead a virtuous and devout life.⁵ These are but commonplaces, in which the most profligate rulers have sometimes taken delight; but nothing comes to us against this Emperor's personal morals, and we know by his laws that he sought to check profligacy.⁶

There remain many edicts issued by Diocletian for the protection of person and property, to prevent frauds in trade, to guard the unwary, the minor, the slave, even the debtor, whom he would not have kept in servitude,⁷—in a word, to regulate all things throughout his vast empire according to justice and humanity.⁸

It was to be feared that the division of the Empire might destroy the unity of legislation and of jurisprudence. To facilitate the work of the tribunals, Diocletian caused a compilation of the imperial laws to be prepared by one of his jurisconsults.⁹ The

¹ *Codex Just.* viii. 49, 4.

² *Ibid.* v. 3, 9. See p. 386, note 3, the precautions taken by him to increase the guarantees of justice.

³ *Ibid.* iv. 52, 4.

⁴ *Ibid.* viii. 51, 12.

⁵ *Codex Greg.* v. *De Nuptiis.*

⁶ *Codex Just.* iii. 28, 19; viii. 51, 7; and the numerous fragments of book ix. 9, 19–28.

⁷ *Ibid.* iv. 10, 12: *Ob aes alienum servire liberos creditoribus, jura compelli non patiuntur.*

⁸ Naudet, *Les Changements dans l'administration de l'empire*, pp. 365–371.

⁹ The *Gregorian Code* was followed by the *Code of Hermogenianus*: both of them have come down to us in a merely fragmentary condition. The most ancient ordinance given in the

Gregorian Code begins, it is believed, with an ordinance of Hadrian; it is also with this Emperor, his precursor in great administrative reforms, that Diocletian caused the *Augustan History* to begin.¹ He desired to place before the eyes of his subjects the political and constitutional life of the Empire during the last two centuries; and this idea had at once the grandeur and the utility which characterize all the acts of his government,—one alone excepted, whose gloomy history it remains for us to relate.

Laetantius reproaches the founder of the tetrarchy with his buildings,²—but Trajan and Hadrian also erected a great number; with the ostentation of his court,—a display really useless, which he made the mistake of believing necessary; finally, with the expense required for the maintenance of four courts, and the increase of the administrative staff.³ But the well-being of a state is not measured by the taxes that it pays. Very small taxes are heavy in ill-governed countries, and heavy ones are light to a prosperous people. Now, in Diocletian's lifetime his expenditures had already caused much security,⁴ and they would have occasioned more if his system had endured; for, all productive forces developing themselves in the midst of peace, the Empire would have seen the return of the prosperity which characterized the age of the

former is of the year 196; the most recent of 296 (?). But as it served as a basis to the *Code of Justinian*, which was a collection of the imperial ordinances since the time of Hadrian, it has been thought the ordinances contained in the *Gregorian Code* began with that Emperor. The *Codex Hermogenianus* contains, in the *Corpus juris* of Haenel, only the ordinances of Diocletian and Maximian. The *Theodosian Code*, prepared in the reign of Theodosius II., who ordered a collection of all the edicts and ordinances which had been in force since the accession of Constantine, was published in 438. Cf. Hugo, *Hist. du droit rom. ii. 205.*

¹ Of the six compilers of the *Augustan History*, three wrote in the reign of Diocletian,—Vulcatius Gallicanus, Trebellius Pollio, and Spartianus; the other three, Flavius Vopiscus, Aelius Lampridius, and Julius Capitolinus, were also contemporaries of Diocletian, but do not appear to have published their works until some time in the reign of Constantine. These writers are entirely destitute of ability; but without them we should know almost nothing of the period extending from 117 to 284. We therefore owe gratitude to Diocletian, who stimulated this twofold work of codification and of history.

² In sect. 7, *De Morte pers.*, written about the year 313. Diocletian, it is true, erected palaces and basilicas, baths and porticos; but he also repaired the fortifications of the frontiers and rebuilt many ruined cities. See on this subject, *passim*. Preuss, *Kaiser Diocletian*, pp. 117-120, gives the long list of his public works.

³ This increase of taxation was, according to Aurelius Victor, easily endured: . . . *Pensionibus inducta lex nova quae sane illarum temporum modestia tolerabilis, in perniciem processit (Caes. 39).*

⁴ *Cultura duplicatur . . . ubi silvae fuere, jam seges est (Pan. vet. iii. 15).*

Antonines. It was great during the twenty years of this Emperor's reign; contemporaries attest this, even Lactantius, who extols "the supreme felicity of this period," and the Bishop of Caesarea, who exclaims: "How flourishing was the Empire at that time! Its power increased daily, and it enjoyed an unbroken peace."¹

"Peace!" This word sums up the whole. Diocletian was able to secure it; and it might have been preserved by his successors, if, remaining faithful to his system, they had, after the example of the first four rulers, formed, "as it were, a chorus gathered around the leader who regulated the movement and the measure."²

¹ *Tumili summa felicitate regnariit, quamili manus suas justorum sanguina non inquinaret* (Lactant., *De Morte pers.* 9; Euseb., *Hist. eel.* viii. 13; see also many passages of Aur. Victor, *Caes.* 39). Burckhardt (*Die Zeit Constantins*) discusses the passionate accusations of Lactantius, and refutes them all; he concludes thus (p. 64): *Ueberhaupt möchte seine Regierung, Alles in Allem genommen, eine der besten und wohlwollendsten gewesen sein, welche das Reich je gehabt hat. Sobald man den Blick frei hält von dem schrecklichen Bilde der Christenverfolgung und von den Entstellungen und Uebertreibungen bei Lactantius, so nehmen die Züge des grossen Fürsten einen ganz andern Ausdruck an.*

² "Diocletian," says Julian in the *Caeſars*, "presents himself at the banquet of the gods, accompanied by the two Maximians and Constantius, my ancestor. Although they hold each other by the hand, they do not come forward in line; they make, as it were, a choir surrounding Diocletian. They would precede him as his guards; but he prevents them, because he desires to attribute to himself no honor above his colleagues. . . . After these four, who together formed so beautiful a harmony . . ."

CHAPTER C.

THE ERA OF THE MARTYRS (303-311 A. D.).

I.—THE EDICTS OF PERSECUTION (303).

THE persecution which, beginning under Diocletian, continued for six years after his time, was a terrible one. It has been attributed to the enmity of an old woman,¹ to the cruelty of Galerius, and to the enfeebled mind of an Emperor advanced in years. It was, on the contrary, a well-planned measure of government, a campaign conducted with remarkable ability; but also it was the application of a policy doubly evil, since it shed blood unjustly and did not attain its end. Diocletian, who believed it necessary, must be held fully responsible for it.

This Dalmatian, the son of a slave, was worthy of the old Roman stock; he was a man of authority and of cool determination, who decided only after mature reflection, and whose faith in the old cult had not been shaken by the religious novelties brought from the East. He persecuted the Christians for the reason that he believed them dangerous to the established religion, to military discipline, and to social order. At the beginning of an edict against the Manichaeans, he says the same that, nine centuries later, the Roman Catholic Church said, in other words, against the Albigensian Manichaeans: “The gods have determined what is just and true; the best men have, by counsel and action, demonstrated and firmly established this. It is not, therefore, permitted to go counter to this divine and human wisdom, and to assume that a new religion may be better than the old; it is the greatest of crimes to wish to change the institutions of our ancestors.”² These are the views of the high pontiff of Rome. The Emperor,

¹ The mother of Galerius, a zealous pagan, whom Lactantius calls: . . . *Deorum montium cultrix*.

² Preamble to the edict *De Maleficiis et Manichaeis* (*Gregor. Code*, xiv. 4). These were the views of enthusiastic pagans and short-sighted statesmen. The idea that the prosperity of the

the statesman, did not at first conform his conduct at all to them. He had respected the edict of Gallienus favoring the churches, and had suffered the Christians to make their way everywhere, into the army, into the court. Eusebius names many who were living near the Emperors and on terms of friendship with them, and made proselytes even in the very family of Diocletian, whose wife and daughter seem to have been gained over to the faith; and he writes: "It is difficult to tell in what high esteem our doctrine is held, and how great is the liberty which we enjoy. The Emperors have made many of the believers governors of provinces without requiring them to sacrifice to the gods. They have permitted their officers publicly, and accompanied by their wives, their children, and their slaves, to fulfil the duties of religion even in the imperial presence. The bishops are honored, and churches have been built in all the cities."¹

Mazarin said of the French Protestants of his time: "This little flock browses upon pernicious weeds, but it does not go astray." At this epoch of his reign Diocletian had the same opinion in respect to the Christians. A singular phrase in an edict of 311 aids us to understand this involuntary respect for the Crucified. Galerius, in granting peace to the Christians, says: "Our indulgence lays you under obligation to pray to your God for our health and for the prosperity of the Empire." Galerius manifestly believed that Jesus was a divinity, and that, like Apollo or Jupiter, he could do men good or harm. With the doctrine of the *δαιμόνες*, all was explained. In that time of philosophic and religious confusion, pagans and Christians believed in *daimons*: the evil spirits

Empire depended upon an assiduous worship of the gods, was in the mind of the Emperor and in the minds of many of his subjects. Vopiscus (*In Caro*, 9) promises Galerius and Diocletian the most brilliant triumphs, *si a nostris non deseratur promissus numinum favor*.

¹ *Hist. eccl.* viii. 6: "Dorotheus and Gorgonius, raised to high office, were loved by the Emperors as if they had been their own children." Lucian, chief of the eunuchs, had relations with the Bishop of Alexandria, Theonas, who wrote thus to him: *Quanto . . . ipsis Christianis, velut fidelioribus, vitam et corpus suum curandum credidit (Diocletianus), tanto debet nos sollicitiores esse . . . ut per id plurimum Christi nomen glorificetur.* In the same letter Theonas speaks of the peace *per honum principem ecclesias concessa* (Routh, *Relig. sacr.* iii. 439). This letter, the passage of Eusebius which has just been quoted, and the whole history of the reign of Diocletian, prevent us from agreeing in the opinion held by various Roman Catholic writers that there was an official persecution in the early years of this Emperor. I say "official," because there may have been isolated condemnations pronounced for assumed crimes against the civil law. In respect to Christians who were called "the Emperor's friends," see Le Blant, *Suppl aux Actes de Ruinart*, p. 76.

were the opponents' gods; the good, those whom the individual himself adored, and miracles, attributed to either class, were readily accepted by all. Diocletian certainly held this opinion, and continued to hold it so long as toleration did not seem to be dangerous.

To prevent revolutions, to render alike hopeless the intrigues of ambitious men and insurrections among the soldiery, and by a policy of intimidation to repress all hostile designs from without,—such had been the object of his reign; and up to this time all had yielded to his prudence and his arms. But within the Empire a grave difficulty remained, which was increasing every day. For forty years the Christians had enjoyed freedom of worship, and their confidence had increased with their numbers. They might be heard passionately accusing the whole human race of having lived in mental darkness, except in one remote corner of the world. Nothing had as yet impaired the Roman idea of the family: domestic worship was still performed on the hearthstone of the parental abode or at the ancestral tombs, and now men heard a doctrine taught which condemned these beloved dead to eternal flames. At a time when the state, accepted as a divine existence, claimed the right to rule men's consciences as well as their outward acts, the Christians were in revolt against the gods, and nearly so against the Emperors. "Who are you?" Galerius said to them. "A turbulent Jewish sect, which has denied the God of its fathers, and then attacked the gods of the Empire; which has made laws for itself according to its own caprice, and gathers in seditious assemblies."¹ And, in truth, they formed in the midst of the sickly and disordered pagan world a state full of life and hope; for this new republic had what the old had long since ceased to possess,—its popular assemblies, its elections, its leaders chosen by common consent, and, in its councils, that representative system whose force the Empire had never fitly recognized. Upon whatever point in the provinces the Emperors turned their eyes, they beheld communities of men at once enthusiastic and disciplined, docile

¹ These are the terms of the edict of 311. Euseb., *Hist. eccl.* viii. 17, and Lactantius, 34: *Volumamus . . . iusta leges reveras et publicam disciplinam, Romanorum cuncta corrigere atque id providere, ut etiam Christiani, qui parentum suorum reliquerant sectam, ad bonas mentes redirent.*

at the voice of their pastors, sometimes rebellious against that of the magistrates, leading a different life and actuated by another spirit from that of their fellow-citizens, strangers in the midst of their native country, indifferent to her and to her fate. Certainly it was a peril for the pagan state and for the social order which the state represented. In the administrative and in the official world there were many who regretted that the misfortunes of the time, the captivity of Valerian, the weakness of his son, had not permitted the extirpation from the social body of this hostile element which undermined it; and certain incidents seemed to justify this feeling on the part of those blind adherents of a perishing past.

Eusebius speaks of a great agitation of the churches about this time. Was it a revival of the old Montanist spirit? Were some hot-headed disciples of Tertullian¹ declaring that the camp-life was incompatible with the Christian life? This we do not know. The soldiers were not volunteers, the service was obligatory; and once enlisted, the soldier must remain in the camps for many long years. The tedium of barrack-life gave men time for conscientious scruples, and many of them came to regard it as impiety to serve idolatrous rulers, and as sacrilege to share in national festivals which the army celebrated with military pomp. It is probable that in the army the Christians lived separately, forming *conciliabula* which excited suspicion; that in the cities secret visits to Christian communities were detected which had the air of being intrigues leading to plots. The *Acts* of St. Victor give this last motive as the cause of that martyr's condemnation.

The Bishop of Caesarea was the contemporary of the events which he relates, and his testimony is to be received when he has no interest in altering the fact. His own words authorize us to believe that there were in the army excesses of zeal, and for the sake of religion violations of the military law: that Christians refused to be enrolled, which was desertion: that they refused to perform certain duties commanded them, which was a disobedience: or to fulfil certain obligations resting upon every soldier as such, like

¹ See the *De Corona milit.* of Tertullian, and what he says in chap. xi.: *Credimus
humani sacramentum divino superduci licere?* "Does any one think that the pledge to the Emperor stands higher than the pledge to God?"

the carrying of particular standards, etc. The *Acts* of individual martyrs confirm this interpretation.

At Theveste, a citizen who, by the amount of his land-tax, was bound to furnish a soldier, brings to the proconsul his son Maximilian, whom the recruiting officer had accepted for military duty. Upon the order to place himself under the measure, that his height might be marked, Maximilian replies that, being a Christian, he cannot be a soldier. The magistrate pays no attention to this, but orders him to be measured; then directs the cord to be put round his neck upon which is suspended the leaden tablet bearing his description. "I shall break it," Maximilian exclaims; "I will never wear anything but the token of my only master, Jesus Christ." The proconsul explains to him that he can, as so many others have done, freely fulfil all his religious duties in the army; but the Montanist persists, and is put to death for the refusal of the military oath. The sentence makes no reference to the Christian faith.¹ A little later, in this same Africa where Tertullian had lauded desertion from the army and had urged to martyrdom,² at Tingis, on one occasion when the garrison celebrated Maximian's birthday, the centurion Marcellus threw down at the feet of the soldiers his vine-stock, his military belt, and his weapons, saying: "I will no longer serve your Emperors, and I despise their gods of wood and stone." Instead of silently taking advantage of what the government at that time allowed,—liberty of conscience, or even his dismissal from the army,—he insulted, in the midst of a solemn ceremony, both the state religion and the Emperors; this was a public provocation which could not be tolerated, and he was put to death.³ The law commanded this punishment, and Marcellus had sought it.

At last the government began to notice these acts of disorder. Both for its own sake and the sake of the Empire, it needed to be sure of its troops: and this it could not be with soldiers who put any limit to their obedience. The army was subjected to

¹ Extract from the official acts: *Ita notariis excepta: . . . in sacro comitatu Christiani sunt et militant* (Ruinart, *Acta sincera*, p. 299). This took place in the year 295 or 296.

² See above, chap. xci. Tertullian says, in the *De Fuga*, 9: *Spiritus omnes paene ad martyrium exhortat.*

³ *Acta sincera*, p. 302. The date is uncertain; it may have been 298.

examination, and those who declared their presence under the standards incompatible with their religious faith were discharged.

"Many," says Eusebius,¹ "left the service. A general having given his soldiers the choice of renouncing their religion or their military grade, they preferred to confess the name of Jesus and part with their worldly advantages."

This consideration for soldiers who refused to submit to the common rule was not habitual with the Romans.² Galerius was indignant at it; he saw in it—and rightly—the loss of discipline; and he proposed to employ against all Christians the means of intimidation employed against those in the army.

Although Diocletian had shown in Egypt that he did not hesitate in shedding blood when it was a question of chastising rebels, he hesitated to strike those who were not so. He hoped that an execution now and then, in virtue of military law, would suffice to repress everywhere the extremes of religious zeal. But now civil society, in its turn, becomes unsettled, and the great administrative instrument of the Empire, the municipal system, begins to work badly and threatens to become useless. The Christian is no more willing to be a citizen than to be a soldier.³ He refuses the office of duumvir, even of decurion, because of the pagan observances these offices impose; he divides or distributes his property that he may no longer possess the twenty-five *jugera* which condemn him to the curia, and the Christian Emperors later were compelled to take severe measures against those "who had rather serve the Church than the Senate";⁴ and such is the penury of the *honestiores* that Diocletian permits the duties of the decurionate to be imposed upon freedmen, and even upon persons who have been branded as infamous.⁵

¹ *Hist. eccl.* viii. 1, 4. The measure was general,—*datis ad propositos litteris*, says Lactantius (*De Mort. pers.*, 19); and he adds: *Nec amplius quidquam contra legem aut religionem Dei fecit.*

² The edict was not formally obeyed everywhere. The acts of SS. Julius, Nicander, and Marcian, show soldiers put to death for having refused to burn the usual grain of incense upon the altar, on receiving the largess given by Galerius on occasion of the tenth anniversary of his accession. Generals accustomed to punish severely all disobedience had felt themselves, in condemning these soldiers, to be acting in accordance with military law.

³ "Public affairs are not our affairs" (*Nec ulla magis res aliena quam publica.* Tertullian, *Apol.* 38).

⁴ *Curiiles qui ecclesiis malunt servire quam curiis* (*Codex Theod.* xii. 104, 115).

⁵ *Infames personae . . . curialium vel civilium munerum vacationem non habent* (*Codex Theod.* x. 56 and 57).

At this time, also, between philosophers and Christians, and between differing sects, disputes are beginning or going on, and the air is full of clamor. From Persia comes a new religion.—that of the Manichaeans. Containing elements derived from the doctrines of Zoroaster and from those of Jesus, it disturbs men's minds in the border provinces of the two Empires, and, as usual, the magistrates accuse its followers of a thousand crimes which Saint Epiphanes repeats, turning against these sectaries the same accusation of scandalous rites which had so long been made against the Christians.¹ In Egypt, Meletius makes a schism;² Hierax begins another. In Africa the language interchanged among the bishops at the Council of Cirta (305) shows the violence of some of these men of peace, and announces that of the Donatists, who a few years later were to cover the province with blood and ruins. Porphyry, or a Neo-Platonist of his school, composes at this time his treatise against the Christians, which doctors and bishops combat with angry refutations.³ A famous rhetorician, Arnobius, attacks the Church, which later he will defend, and a great functionary of the Empire, Hierocles, vicar of the district of Bithynia, mingles in the fray. The latter publishes his *Philalethes*,⁴ “the Friend of Truth,” setting over against the miracles of Jesus those of Apollonius of Tyana.—“who, however,” he says, “was not made a god for that.” And it is not questions of dogma

¹ Before becoming an orthodox Christian, Saint Augustine had been for nine years a Manichaean,—which leads us to believe there could be no immorality in this cult. The ordinance of Diocletian says: . . . *De Persica adversaria nobis gente . . . multa facinora committere, populos quietos turbare* (*Codex Greg. xiv. 4*),—the chiefs of the sect shall be burned, with their books; the adherents belonging to the lower classes decapitated; the *honestiores* sent to the mines. The date of the rescript is uncertain.

² “Separating himself from Peter, his metropolitan, and the other bishops, he published calumnies against them” (*Fleury, Hist. eccl. viii. 24* [about 301]).

³ Laetantius mentions a philosopher who, in 303, wrote at Nicomedea three books against the Christians. It has been maintained that this philosopher could not be Porphyry, because the author of the *Divinae institutiones* (v. 2) speaks of his disorderly life. But Laetantius never hesitates to calumniate his adversaries, and we know from Saint Augustine (*Civ. Dei* v. 32) that at the time of the persecution Porphyry was still living. It is at least established by the words of Laetantius that a philosopher wrote at Nicomedea against the Christians at the time when Diocletian's edict was promulgated, and this suffices for our statement. Some critics place the composition of Porphyry's book between the years 290 and 300. Saint Methodius wrote against it a poem of ten thousand lines (Saint Jerome, *De Viris ill. 83*). Eusebius also refuted it.

⁴ *Ausus est libros suos nefarios ac Dei hostes Φιδαληθεῖς annotare* (Laetantius, *Div. inst.* v. 2; cf. what remains to us of the treatise of Eusebius against Hierocles).

which are in dispute; to such the people would not care to listen. Porphyry, with murderous accusation, shows the plague ravaging cities, and Aesculapius failing to drive it away, because he himself has fled far from the abominations of the Christian faith.¹ To the strifes of doctors corresponds that of the crowd. Some exclaim that the gods of Olympus are evil spirits, and assume to themselves the power of driving them out; others dread this satanic power, and imagine that the sign of the cross will hinder sacrifices from being completed.² No man has seen the gods flee away, or the flame upon the altar go out, at a Christian's gesture; but the pagan world believes the Christians capable of every crime, and reviles them while it waits for permission to drag them into the arena.

The Christians fight among themselves also. "The liberty which we enjoyed," says Eusebius, "had caused the relaxation of discipline. The war began among ourselves by violent language,— bishops against bishops, people against people. When the evil had reached its height, Divine Justice raised its arm to punish us. The believers who followed the profession of arms were the first to be persecuted. After this warning from the Lord, instead of seeking to propitiate him, we added crimes to crimes; our pastors, despising the divine rules, disputed bitterly with each other, and strove for the highest rank. Then, according to the word of Jeremiah, the Lord from heaven overthrew the glory of Israel."³

It was in the East that religious animosities were the most

¹ Euseb., *Praep. Ev.* v. 1; Lactantius, *Div. inst.* iv. 27.

² Lactantius, *De Morte pers.* 10: *Cum adstiterint immolanti imposuerunt frontibus suis immortale signum, quo facta fugatis daemoniis, sacra turbata sunt.* Prudentius also relates that the sacrifices of Julian were disturbed by the presence of a Christian.

³ *Hist. eccl.* viii. 1. These deplorable quarrels continued throughout the persecution. Eusebius breaks off in his account of the martyrs in Palestine to say again: "I will not speak of the ambition of some men, of their rash and unlawful laying-on of hands, of the differences and disputes of the martyrs themselves, of the divisions by which they tore the members yet remaining to the Church." See Tillemont, *Mém. eccl.* v. 98, 100, and 103, in respect to the disorders at Rome; the canons of the Council of Elvira for those which it was necessary to repress in Spain; the acts, first scandalous, later abominable, of the African *circumscriptiones*; the wretched intrigues attributed by Saint Athanasius to the Eusebians; the denunciations sent in to Constantine in 325 by the bishops against several of their brethren (Rufinus, i. 2), etc.; and we shall be convinced that along with great virtues the Christian communities had many weaknesses,— which is very human,— and that it will not do always to accept the Church of the legends as the real Church of history.

bitter, and from February, 299, to the beginning of the year 302 Diocletian resided there almost constantly.¹ When in the autumn of this latter year he returned to Nicomedeia, his mind was made



COIN OF
NICOMEDEIA.²

up to put an end to these agitations and bring back tranquillity into civil society, as he had brought it back into the legions and into the provinces. Galerius had long been of this opinion. But what means should be adopted? During the entire winter the two rulers discussed this terrible question. Lactantius asserts that Diocletian

would have been content with prohibiting the army and the palace to the Christians, — that is to say, military and administrative duties; that, finally, he laid the matter before his council, and that they coincided with the opinion of Galerius. The measures with which it is supposed Diocletian would have been satisfied, would not have been more severe than those which excluded from public office and the liberal professions the Protestants of France up to the time of the Revolution, and the Roman Catholics in England to our own time. But the obstinate conservatives of the day made every effort to force the Augustus into the most sanguinary road. The contradictory feelings of the statesman and the pagan which fought within him threw this strong soul into an uncertainty, whence he sought escape by asking advice of Heaven. He decided that the question should be laid before the oracle of the Didymaeon Apollo at Miletus.⁴ Apollo could have no indulgence for those who ruined his priests and blasphemed his name; he replied that the enemies of the gods must be destroyed. The Christians therefore appeared to be condemned both by human and divine wisdom.

If we may believe Lactantius, Galerius proposed to have those who refused to sacrifice burned alive. Diocletian hoped to effect

¹ So we infer from the date of many rescripts (Mommsen, *Zeil.* p. 444).

² ΝΙΚΟΜΗΔΕΩΝ ΔΙΚ ΝΕΩΚΟΡΩΝ. Love fleeing from a kneeling Psyche (reverse of a bronze of Maximus).

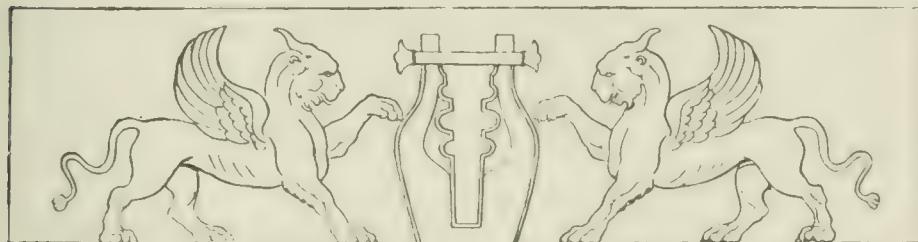
³ Didymaeon Apollo, on a coin of Miletus. ΔΙΔΥΜΕΥC ΜΙΑΕCIΩN. The god standing, holding a bow and a small figure of a stag (reverse of a bronze of Claudius).

⁴ Lactantius, *De Morte pers.* 11.



DIDYMAEON
APOLLO.³

the suppression of the Church without bloodshed. The resolution he was about to take was a very serious one, and he asked the pontiffs to designate a propitious day for its execution. They indicated the festival of the Terminalia (23d February, 303) as the day on which the accursed sect should be brought to an end. At daybreak the praetorian prefect, accompanied by *duces*, tribunes, and soldiers, presented himself before the church in Nicomedeia, forced an entrance, seized the sacred objects, and committed them to the flames. He would have set fire to the buildings; but Dio-



BAS-RELIEF FROM THE TEMPLE OF THE DIDYMAEAN APOLLO AT MILETUS.¹

cletian, who from the roof of his palace surveyed what was done, fearing lest the flames might spread to the adjacent buildings, ordered the temple to be demolished. On the following day appeared the first edict of persecution: the Christian churches were to be destroyed, the religious books burned, and the sacred places and cemeteries confiscated.² Those who refused to sacrifice were to be branded with infamy, of whatever rank they were, declared incapable of filling any public office, and in case of condemnation for any crime, subjected to the penalties denounced against the *humiliores*.³ All judicial proceedings would be authorized against them, while they could institute none against others;⁴ their assemblies were prohibited; he who was already placed by his condition among the *humiliores* was made a slave of the treasury.⁵

¹ Texier, *Descr. de l'Asie Mineure*, pl. 140, fig. 2.

² De Rossi, *Roma sotterr.* vol. ii. pp. viii and 378. Constantine, in his turn, ordered the books of Porphyry to be burned.

³ See Vol. VIII., Appendix.

⁴ To leave to the Christians no way of eluding the law, *arae in secretariis et pro tribunali positac, ut litigatores prius sacrificarent* (Lactantius, 15).

⁵ Euseb., *Mart. de Pal.* 1, and the *Actes of Saint Theodosius of Ancyra* (Bollandists, May 18).

and the Christian slave could never be enfranchised. This first edict did not go so far as that issued by Valerian,—it did not order the death of the Christians; but it made of them a people of pariahs. Measures nearly similar to these were adopted upon the

revocation of the Edict of Nantes,—a double iniquity, which was the consequence, and has remained the condemnation, of established religions.

Violence calls forth violence. Diocletian would have been glad to escape shedding blood; but it was to flow in torrents. An indignant Christian tore down the edict and destroyed it with loud reproaches against the Augustus and the Caesar. “These are their bulletins of victory over the Goths and Sarmatians!” he cried ironically.

To pluck down an imperial edict

was a crime of high treason, and the man was burned on a fire of charcoal.² Soon after this a fire broke out in the palace, and a fortnight later a second fire occurred near the rooms occupied by the Emperor. It is difficult to impute all this to chance. Lactantius accuses Galerius of it, and says that the latter then threw the blame upon the Christians, in order to exasperate Diocletian. Eusebius makes Constantine relate to the Fathers, at the Council of Nicaea, that he had seen a thunderbolt, the instrument of divine justice, fall upon the palace and set it on fire.³ But the Constantine of Eusebius often saw, between heaven and

¹ Mutilated statue found in the ruins of the temple of the Didymaeon Apollo (*Texier, ibid. fig. 3*).

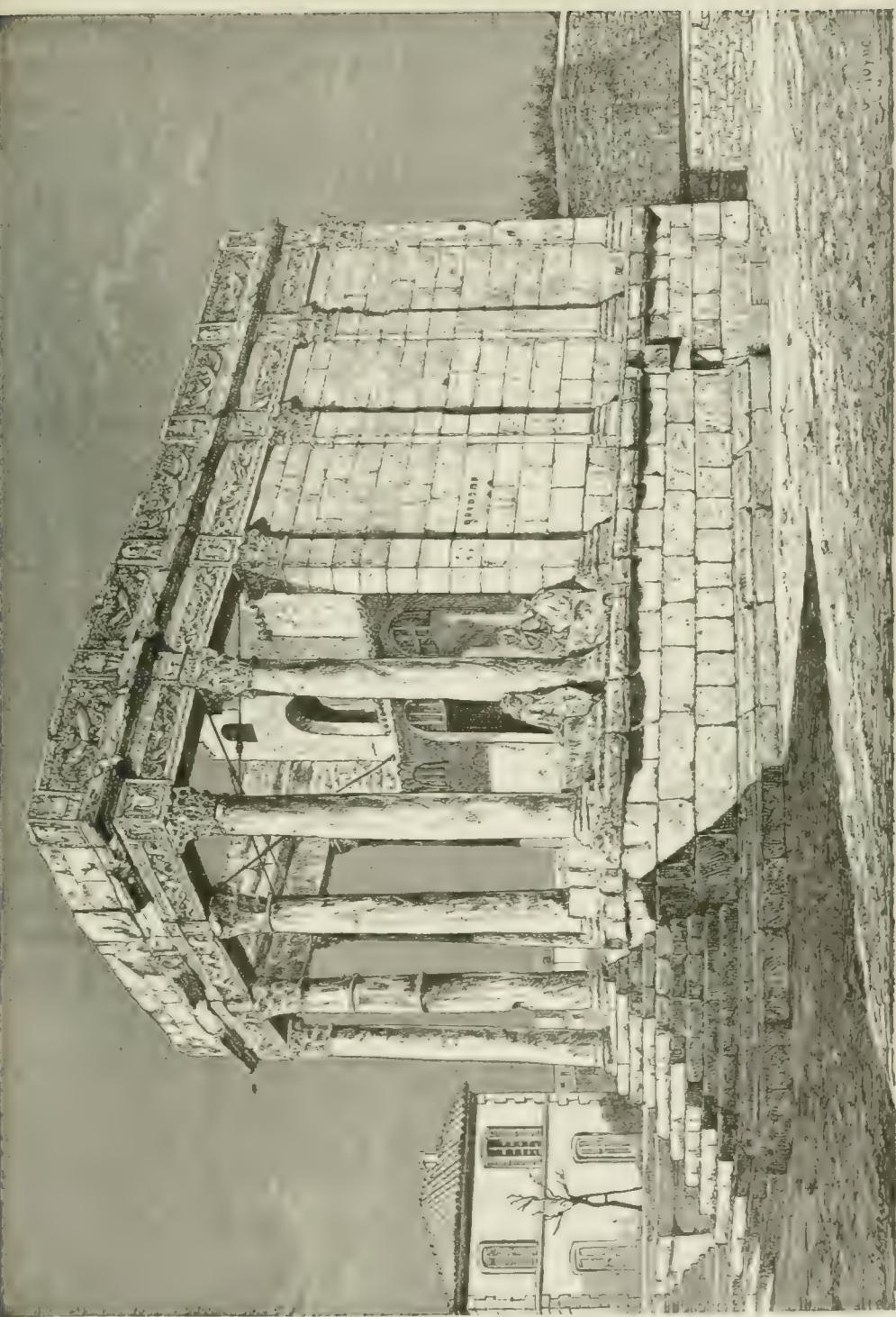
² *Legitime coctus*, says Lactantius; that is, burned according to the established rules (*De Morte pers. 13*). It is remarkable that the first edict was not promulgated in Syria till fifty days later, and in Africa after four months. With his habitual prudence, Diocletian waited to see the effects of the blow he had struck at Nicomedeia.

³ *Orat. ad S. Coet. xxv.* According to this passage, the damage done by the fire must have been very considerable.

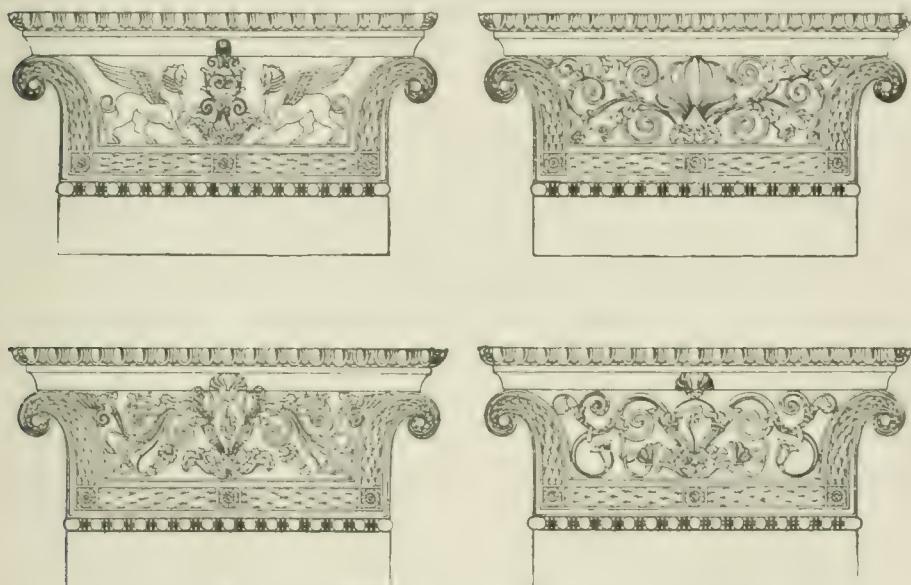


MUTILATED STATUE.¹

PRINCIPAL FAÇADE OF THE TEMPLE OF MINERVA AT THEVESTE (MODERN TERESSA).



earth, things that no other man ever witnessed. It was more natural to accuse the Christians, and the life of the Emperors appeared threatened by an extensive conspiracy. If they were not at all threatened in this way, they at least had reason to dread the revenge of individuals, for the Christians were now so numerous that there were to be found among them, besides resigned victims,



FRAGMENTS OF THE ENTABLATURE OF THE TEMPLE OF THE DIDYMAEAN APOLLO.¹

others who would by no means submit quietly to injustice. Galerius was no longer safe in Nicomedeia, and he quitted the city. Left alone in the palace, Diocletian, who also believed himself surrounded by assassins, ordered a severe search to be made, and all who were suspected of being adherents to the new faith to be required to sacrifice. The Emperor's wife and daughter—though with reluctance, it is believed—set the example; others followed. But there were slaves, freedmen, and eunuchs who refused; and this refusal appeared to convict them as authors or accomplices in the recent crime, and they were cruelly put to death. The investigation was pursued outside of the palace, and suspicion produced culprits: the Bishop of Nicomedeia was beheaded, and many persons of humble condition were burned or thrown into the sea.

¹ See in Vol. III. p. 713, the bases of the columns of this temple, and in Vol. V. p. 365. a view of its ruins. (From the Louvre.)

At Nicomedeia the Christians suffered as incendiaries; in the provinces they were punished as rebels. It appears, at least, that to the exasperation caused at certain points by the destruction of the churches, may be attributed two insurrections,—disturbances unknown in twenty years,—which broke out, one at Antioch, the other in the Melitene, on the upper Euphrates. Nothing is known of the latter, which might have become dangerous, owing to the neighborhood of Armenia, where Christianity, preached by Saint Gregory Illuminator, was at that time making great progress.¹ As to the revolt in Syria, Libanius represents it, eighty years later, as a foolish freak of the soldiers.² But the leader of these soldiers had assumed the purple, and the magistrates of Antioch and of Seleucia, with many of the inhabitants, were put to death. If the Christians had not been in some way concerned in these movements, Eusebius would not have mentioned them,—especially he would not have indicated them as the cause which determined Diocletian to issue a new and more severe edict.³ The rigor of the repression proves the importance of the revolt. In the eyes of the Emperor it had been an attempt to transfer the Empire to the Christians; and this attempt was not at all rash, since that which failed to be accomplished in 303 was undertaken with success eight years later. In the last year of the persecution the governor of Palestine, hearing a martyr speak of the Heavenly Jerusalem, formed the idea that the Christians proposed to build a city and fortify themselves in it against the Romans. This governor is ridiculous, but his apprehension was not so; for he naturally believed that the persecuted, whose ardor to meet death he could not understand, would seize any method of escaping from persecution.

A century earlier they aspired to heaven only; but their strength increasing with their numbers, they began to concern themselves with the affairs of earth. With his usual sagacity, Diocletian took note of the change which in the minds of many was

¹ Simeon Metaphrastes relates the story of the thirty-three Christians martyred at Melitene; but Tillemont (*Mém. eccl.* v. 171) does not believe that these *Acts* are trustworthy. If they have historic foundation, we must still see in them, according to their own details, an execution for refusal of military service, and for blows and wounds inflicted on the recruiting officers.

² *Disc. xiv.*

³ Euseb., *Mart. de Pal.* ii.

at this time going on,—unconsciously to themselves, it is true, but revealed to him by the fire in the palace and the two revolts breaking out amidst the profound calm of the Empire. For twenty years this Emperor, who placed the interests of order above every other consideration, had constrained his gods and their priests to toleration; from the moment when he believed the public peace in danger he sought to save it by energetic measures, and yet, if possible, to avoid bloodshed. He bethought himself of an old law of the Empire which permitted him to punish, without leaving them the resource of an appeal, those who were regarded as *seditionum concitatores vel duces factionum*:¹ and against the insurrection, or the preaching that he dreaded, he took the clergy as hostages: his second edict ordered the arrest of all bishops, priests, and deacons who should refuse to deliver up the Holy Scriptures. By demolishing the churches he prevented the Christians from holding their assemblies and celebrating their religious rites; by depriving these communities of their pastors, he hoped that, left without direction or discipline, these societies would dissolve or would cease to be dangerous; lastly, by the destruction of their sacred books he expected to put a stop to teaching, and by all these methods, to extinguish the faith.² In the moral condition of the world these measures could not but remain powerless; the future belonged to Christianity, and against it two Emperors will waste their strength.

The two edicts of the year 303 did not mention the death-penalty; Diocletian had not thought it needful to go to this extreme.³ The Christians, at that time numbering several millions, could not all be punished; but the Emperor hoped to intimidate all, to cause apostasies among the leaders, and easily bring back the frightened crowd into the temples of the gods. The *Acts* of

¹ *Digest.*, XLIX. i. 16.

² An edict of Constantine (Euseb., *Life of Const.* ii. 30-34) gives liberty to Christians detained in islands, quarries, or mines; restores their property to those who, without being *caviles* by birth, had been *addicti curiae*, which had placed their fortune at the disposal of the municipal administrations; and gives back their grades, or the *honesta missio*, to officers and soldiers who had been expelled from the army, their honors to those who had been branded with infamy, their condition of free-born to those who had been made slaves, etc. This edict completes our knowledge of the penalties pronounced against the Christians.

³ See the *Acts of Saint Hilary* (Bollandists, March 16): . . . *Ut ipso tormentato, universi ejus corrigantur exemplo* (Le Blant, *op. cit.* p. 42).

Saint Romanus, though mingled with legend, prove that Galerius himself dared not pronounce a death-sentence. He was present at Antioch when Romanus was condemned to be burned alive,—less, perhaps, on account of his noble persistence in confessing his faith, than for words which his judge considered acts of treason; for example, these: “Christ alone is my king.” The authorities dared not proceed to execution without the order of Galerius, and the Caesar did not give the order.¹ At Carthage the same hesitation was manifested, not in torturing, but in taking life. The proconsul permits Saint Saturninus to proclaim his faith openly, and makes this no ground of accusation, but inquires of him whether he has taken part in assemblies contrary to the imperial law, and whether he has kept books of magic.² The saint replies in language which is still the Church’s teaching: “First of all we must obey God.” The Christians refused, therefore, to submit to the laws of exterior order. That these laws were bad, no man doubts; but the revolt against them was none the less a revolt against the established government; and still the proconsul, after having put the accused to the torture, in the hope of obtaining from them a word which will permit him to set them free, sends them to the public prison, and there he leaves them.³ On the subject of these *Acts* we shall remark further that the magistrate carefully separates the question of religion from that of public order. When the brethren cry out to him: “We are Christians!” he replies: “That is not what I ask you;” and the sole question that he puts to them is this: “Have you been at the assembly?” or “Have you in your possession forbidden books?”⁴ These gatherings having been prohibited by the sovereign power, fell under the action of the old laws against secret societies; and the *Evangel*s which propagated the faith, and the *Passiones* which stimulated

¹ Euseb., *Mart. de Palest.* 2. The same happened in the case of Alpheus and Zacchaeus: Χρυστὸν βασιλέα Ἰησοῦν (*ibid.* 1). Procopius, being called upon to burn incense in honor of the four rulers, replies with a line of Homer: “It is not good to have so many masters; we desire but one.” The judge considers these words an insult to the Emperors and a revolt against the government, and orders the punishment of treason (Euseb., *ibid.*). Many of the judges attempted to transform the prosecutions against the Christians into political prosecutions.

² Ruinart, *Acta sinc.* p. 387; *Acta SS. Saturnini, Dativi*, etc., sect. 12.

³ Bollandists, February 11, sections 7 and 16.

⁴ Ruinart, *Acta sinc.* p. 367.

SPALATO (FROM THE VOYAGE EN DALMATIE OF CASSAS).



it, seemed to the pagans to have the character of books of magic, which were proscribed.¹

The imprisonment of the priests did not, however, produce the expected effect; a third edict ordered the setting at liberty of those who would sacrifice, and the constraining of the rest by all possible means to abandon their faith.² The government could legally prohibit assemblies which it believed dangerous, and require of its functionaries that they should sacrifice to the gods of the Empire; but it had not the right to impose this obligation upon all Christians. Drawn on by the fatal development of a false idea, the intelligent but severe man who ruled at Nicomedeia was about to make his reign, until then peaceful and renowned, the era of the martyrs.

As is the case in all times of persecution, there were governors who, averse to violence, closed their eyes, or contented themselves with an apparent submission. The Bishop of Carthage, Mensurius, had left only a few heretical treatises in his church: these the proconsul seized; and when he was informed where the sacred books were concealed, he refused to make search for them. Nor were all the churches demolished; several of them were only closed, and some even were allowed to remain open.⁴

In other places much ingenuity was used in finding ways for

¹ Prudentius (*Poem. i.* 75) says that many of the *Acta* of the martyrs were at that time destroyed. We have seen Diocletian in Egypt burn books of occult science.

² Euseb., *Hist. eccl.* viii. 6.

³ Marble head found in the ruins of the palace of Diocletian at Nicomedeia. This antique head, now lost, was drawn by Peysonnel at the time of his journey in 1715. The unpublished MS. of this journey is in the library of the Institute of France, whence we have taken the above sketch.

* Tillemont, *Mém. eccl.* v. 29, 37, etc.



MARBLE HEAD.³

the Christians to satisfy the law against their own consent. “A man,” says Eusebius, “being dragged to the altar and constrained to touch the abominable viands, was set free as if he had willingly sacrificed. Another had held out his hand towards the box containing incense, but had taken none from it; and the pagans cried out that he had sacrificed to the gods. The former, half dead from the blows he had received, was cast in with the renegades; the latter vainly protested that he had not done what was required of him: they stopped his mouth by force, so eager were these wretches to have it believed that they had succeeded in their attempts.”¹ Elsewhere the judge said to the Christian: “Sacrifice to whom you will, even to your own God;”² and to make those present believe that a Christian had yielded, drinking the wine of libations, there was offered him water in a red glass.³ “I have seen,” Lactantius further says, “governors boasting that they had never pronounced a single death-sentence, and proud of having conquered the Christians.”⁴ It was not that persecution always offended their consciences; for their reputation of skill, one apostasy was worth more than ten condemnations. The Donatus to whom Lactantius dedicated his book *De Morte persecutorum*, was nine times put to the torture, never in a manner to be fatal, but always with cruelty enough to make recantation probable. In many *Acta* we even read of money offered and honors promised in return for an abjuration.⁵

When, on occasion of the festivals which celebrated the twentieth year of his reign, Diocletian, according to custom, proclaimed an amnesty,⁶ the prison-doors, opened for all ordinary convicts, remained closed upon the Christians. He had put the clergy in confinement through fear of an insurrection; and as he still retained that fear, he still held his prisoners. By the two first edicts the Christians had been degraded from civil honors,

¹ Euseb., *Mart. de Pal.* 1. However, in certain places there existed a strong antipathy; not only did men crowd the scene of execution as a spectacle, but they also pillaged the goods of the prisoners and fugitives (*Actes de S. Théodule d'Ancyre*, Bollandists, May 18).

² Bollandists, March 3 and July 14.

³ Derenbourg, *Hist. de la Palestine*, p. 422.

⁴ *Div. instit.* v. 11.

⁵ Léop. Delisle, *Note sur un manuscrit de Prudence*, p. 6. Cf. Edm. le Blant, supplement to the *Actes de Ruinart*, p. 35.

⁶ Euseb., *Mart. de Pal.* 2. This is the *abolitio generalis* of the *Code Just.* ix. 43.

deprived of the protection of the laws, and declared criminals if they did not surrender their sacred writings, or if they continued to hold their meetings.¹ The third had directed the employment of all means to obtain retractions,—without authorizing, however, in the first phase of the persecution, the extreme penalty. There were executions for offences regarded as crimes against the common law,—insults to the gods, to the Emperors, secret assem-

FRAGMENT OF A GLASS DISK.²

blies, or forbidden meetings; and as it was not possible that a severe policy like this should be everywhere conducted with moderation, privations and tortures had caused many captives to perish in prison. Many, also, under the weight of moral and physical sufferings, had yielded to weakness. The *lapsi* who sacrificed, the *traditores* who gave up the sacred books, the timid who concealed their faith,³ had been numerous, and became, after

¹ Euplius, a deacon, was beheaded at Catana, Aug. 12, 304, for having, contrary to the edicts, called together the Christian community; likewise Philip of Heraeclia in Thrace, the martyrs of Abitina in Africa, Saint Saturninus, etc.

² Fragment of a glass disk representing the commemoration of the twentieth year of Diocletian's reign (*Bulletin de la commission archéologique de Rome*, tenth year, No. 3, pl. xx July to September, 1882).

³ The canons of the Council of Elvira, held in 305, show that many believers had concealed their faith, had filled the offices of duumvir, flamen, and sacrificer, had given money for pagan festivals, for spectacles, and games: the Council even allows them, if they fear to be denounced by their slaves, to keep idols in their houses, on condition of paying them no worship, etc. This is not contradictory to what has been said above of the decline of the municipal system, through the unwillingness of Christians to accept office. The penances imposed by the Council of Elvira are evidently addressed to certain rich men who have tampered with their consciences in order to preserve their wealth: and these compromises occur in all ages of the world. The heresy of the Donatists began in 311, when Donatus attacked the election to the see of Carthage of Cæcilianus, who had been ordained by a bishop *traditor*.

the persecution had ceased, a subject of violent dissensions in the Church. At Antioch, a great city already half Christianized, Romanus was the only person left in prison.¹

It seemed, then, that one more blow would suffice to destroy this Church whose pillars were tottering, and to bring back the whole Empire to the old faith. This was the opinion of Maximian and Galerius; and when, in 304, Diocletian's long and serious illness left them masters of the government, they revived in all its original vigor the last edict of Valerian. The *Acta* of Saint Sabinus, of which the authenticity is doubtful,² relate that when Maximian was present at the games of the circus at Rome, all the people cried out, "Let the Christians die!" and that the Emperor caused it to be proposed to the Senate by the praetorian or urban prefect that a decree should be prepared condemning the Christians to sacrifice or die.³ This is improbable on the face of it; as thus to relinquish to the Senate an act of legislation so important, is contrary to all that the history of the time teaches us. We should therefore reject this decree, mentioned in *Acta* of doubtful authenticity, were it not that Eusebius speaks of imperial letters ordering all men to be present at the sacrifices and take part in them.⁴ Maximian must therefore have written these letters, or Galerius must have caused them to be signed by the second Augustus in a moment of excitement, and the crime of Christianizing was again inscribed in the laws. Then war, unchained by the three wild beasts, as Lactantius says, raged with fury.

The persecution was destined to last eight years. What part in this tragic history belongs to Diocletian? We have seen his repugnance to extreme measures. The Christians made no mistake in identifying their enemy; it is Galerius whom they have pursued with their maledictions. We must remember also that the just horror inspired by these cruelties has deceived the world in respect to the number of victims. Palestine was full of Christians; but in the year 304 only ten perished, of whom six came of their own accord to the executioner.⁵ Italy and Spain had few; at least,

¹ Μόνος, says Eusebius (*Mart. de Pal.* 2).

² Tillemont, *Mém. eccl.* v. 41 and 603.

³ Ap. Surius, December 31.

⁴ Euseb., *Mart. de Pal.* 3.

⁵ During the eight years that the persecution lasted, Eusebius, who was on the spot and has written the history of it, enumerates, in Palestine, only eighty martyrs. From this number

in those countries the *Acta* are rare, and mostly of doubtful authenticity,¹ and we read that Roman believers wishing to obtain reliques, went at that time to seek them in the East. Illyricum, too near the Barbarians to possess great cities given up, like Antioch and Alexandria, to theological quarrels, occupied itself first of all with its mundane safety. It had few bishoprics, and the martyrs assigned to it are few in number: one only became popular, Saint Irenaeus of Sirmium.² In Britain and in Gaul, Constantius Chlorus contented himself with destroying a few churches "He did not destroy the temple built up to God in the hearts of the faithful."³ In Egypt and in the Oriental provinces the martyrs put to death, and still more the confessors sent to the mines after cruel tortures, were very numerous.⁴ One thing, however, is singular.—in the chapter in which Eusebius relates the glorious deaths of the "pastors of the Church," during all the years of persecution, he names only nine bishops.⁵ But the imperial government knew them all: they were the heads of the Churches, and according to the system of Diocletian the head was to be struck; but we have seen that he did not wish to strike mortal blows.

It does not seem even that the administration made search after the Christians (*inquisitio*): otherwise it would have been necessary to employ one part of the population of the Empire in exterminating the other. Moreover the search was needless, for most accounts speak

Gibbon estimates that there may have been, throughout the entire Empire, two thousand martyrs in the eight years, a vast and sad number, certainly, since one single victim would have been too many; but every estimate must be uncertain.

¹ Tillemont, *Mém. eccl.*, v. 41, 58, 74, etc. The most celebrated of the Spanish martyrs of that time was Saint Vincent, whose *Acta* are a legend filled with miracles. The famous inscriptions of Clunia are ranged by Hubner (*C. I. L.*, vol. ii. No. 233) among the apocrypha, and are in their right place.

² Bollandists, March 25. For the *Passio SS. IV coronatorum* (Gurius, November 8), see Hunzicker, *Zur Christenverf.*, p. 262, and De Rossi, *Bal. dearchos', crist.*, sections 3 and 4, No. 11.

³ Lactantius, *De Morte pers.* 15. Eusebius (*Life of Const.* i. 17) maintains even, very mistakenly, that mass was celebrated in his palace at Trèves.

⁴ Cedrenus (*Hist.* p. 467) mentions an edict ordering the right eye of condemned Christians to be plucked out. We cannot tell whether this was an official order, or a practice of certain judges. Eusebius often speaks of this punishment and of the burning of one of the tendons of the foot in the case of Christians sent to the mines by Maximin.

⁵ *Hist. eccl.* viii. 13. Sixteen had already occupied in succession the see of Alexandria: only the last one died by martyrdom, in 311.

of the Christians giving themselves up. This one overthrows an altar of the gods; that one burns a temple of Cybele; another goes straight up to the governor who is offering a sacrifice, and plucks the incense from his hands; another insults him by word and act. "They were," says Saint Augustine, "arrows of God shot by the saints at the faces of the oppressors."¹ Then there was seen something like an epidemic of religious suicides. Contrary to the Church's teaching, which disapproves of men by voluntary acts of imprudence or provocation rushing to meet their martyrdom, the *Acta* show a multitude of Christians eager to exchange their mortal life for the blessedness promised by the Scriptures.² And we must also say, with a bishop of the time,³ among these saints of the eleventh hour were found—a thing less strange than it appears—men who speculated upon torture, hoping, doubtless, that it would not be carried to the fatal point; some overwhelmed with debts, to finish gloriously a worthless life; others, to live in prison on the charity of the Christian community; still others, incapable of a high spirituality, to gain salvation by a last effort of bodily endurance. But, on the other hand, how many admirable instances of devotion, and stoical deaths! As we read some of the answers

¹ Saint Augustine, *In Psalm. XXXIX.* sect. 16; Euseb., *Mart. de Pal.* 4 and 5; λόγοι τε καὶ ἔργοι. Cf. Bollandists, February 7, Saint Theodore of Amasia.

Martyr . . .
Infemit usque tyranni oculos
Sputa jacit.

PRUDENTIUS, *Peristeph.* iii. Saint Eulal. 126-128.

Cf. Le Blant, *Supplément aux Actes de Ruinart*, p. 33.

² Like the three Cilician martyrs, Tarachus, Probus, and Andronicus (Tillemont, *Mém. eccl.* v. 285), and a crowd of others. Sulpicius Severus (*Hist. sacra*, ii. 46) says: "They ran to these glorious combats, seeking for death more eagerly than now cupidity seeks for bishoprics." On the question of voluntary martyrdom, and on the means employed, on the other hand, to urge to his death a brother disinclined to it, see p. 68.

³ See the letter of Mensurius, bishop of Carthage (*ap.* Saint Augustine, ix. 568), who was anxious that those who voluntarily provoked punishment should not be reckoned as martyrs: . . . *Quidam facinorosi et nisi debitoris qui occasione persecutionis, vel carere vellent onerosa multis debitis vita, vel purgare se patarent, et quasi abluc facinora sua, vel certe ad quirere pecuniam et in custodia acievis profini de obsequio Christianorum.* Thus did the Peregrinus of Lucian. There is also mention in the *Acta* of Saint Theodoret (*ap.* Ruinart) of debtors seeking death to escape the severity of the treasury or of their creditors. Cf. Le Blant, *Suppl. aux Actes de Ruinart*, pp. 105 *et seq.* The fate of insolvent debtors was so cruel that Constantine was obliged to moderate it—but long after him, even, Valentinian I. put to death insolvent debtors to the public treasury (Amm. Marellinus, xxvii. 7). I have mentioned (p. 233, note 5) the banquets and the intoxicating liquors by which the courage of certain irresolute martyrs was stimulated.

given at the trial, we seem to hear the songs of a virginal purity already far above the level of earth.¹

Political history does not record all the acts of courage in a battle, and of the soldiers who die for their country she preserves only the memory of their victory. Neither is it within her province to relate those triumphant deaths which have been the strength and are the honor of the Church. This duty belongs to religious history, which must determine what deeds are to be remembered,—a long and difficult work, begun centuries ago, and not yet ended. We refer the reader, therefore, to the hagiographers for the story of those heroic and horrible scenes where human wickedness exerted itself to discover new methods of causing the flesh to cry out, and where the victims suffered for the noblest of causes,—liberty of conscience. Like the sufferers by persecution, Diocletian also was to endure his pain; this man, so sagacious, who near the close of his reign thus lost his wisdom, was to behold from the retirement of his palace at Salona the death of his gods and the triumph of the Christ.²

II.—ABDICTION AND DEATH OF DiOCLETIAN (305–313).

AT the close of the year 303 the two Augusti were approaching the twentieth year of their reign, and they had taken together at the altar of the gods a pledge to mark this anniversary by a deed which has been imitated but once, at which posterity is amazed, and which, in the interests of the Roman world, it would have been better not to do. In the spring of 303 Diocletian quitted Nicomedeia and travelled slowly through Thrace and the Danubian provinces towards Italy. He had at last decided to visit that Rome which he had never seen since his accession, and to celebrate at one and the same time the festival of the *Sacra Vicennalia*

¹ For instance, that of Saint Theodora of Alexandria.

² The Christians followed him in later ages with their maledictions, as was their right; and so far as the persecution was concerned, it was justice. An historian of this Emperor, Casagrandi (*Diocleziano*, p. 368, No. 1) has even put this question: *Quale è stata la mano che dalle storie di Ammiano e Zosimo strappava le pagini dedicate a Diocleziano? Chi ha distrutta la vita che di lui scrisse il suo segretario Eustenio?*

and the triumph which the Senate had long before decreed to the two Emperors.¹ But as he did not love an unwholesome popularity, and was not of the number who stoop to obtain or to keep power, he proposed to make but an official and brief visit to the old capital of the world. On the twentieth of November he entered the city with Maximian in a chariot drawn by four elephants, as a memorial of his Asiatic victories. Behind him were borne figures representing the Persian king whom he had conquered, and the wives and children of Narses captured in his camp, all arrayed in purple robes embroidered with pearls; and after these the trophies recalling victories gained over the nations adjacent to the frontiers. According to the custom on these anniversaries, he granted an amnesty which opened the prison doors to all, the Christians excepted, and gave largesses in all the great cities. The people of Rome had their large share in this,—a *congiarium* of 310,000,000 denarii, or 1,500 denarii apiece, if the population still numbered 200,000.² Games and combats of animals were the necessary accompaniment of these ceremonies; Diocletian gave some, but they were lacking in magnificence. In the hunts, few animals were killed; in the amphitheatre, few gladiators. The people cried out against the niggardliness of the Emperor; they murmured still more when they heard reported this saying of Diocletian's, which made parsimony the rule: "In presence of the censor there should be moderation." At bottom this captious crowd displeased the ruler, who cared much more for the needs of the Empire than for those of the populace of Rome;³ content

¹ M. Lépaulle, a learned numismatist, in his *Note sur l'Atelier monétaire de Lyon*, 1883, announces, from three denarii in his collection, found in 1880, a fact which is nowhere mentioned: namely, the celebration of the Secular Games by Diocletian about fifty years later than those of the Emperor Philip. The authority of the coins is great, but the silence of historians on this important fact is very singular, especially of Zosimus, who speaks at great length of the Secular Games, and knows nothing of those of Diocletian, although in speaking of them he mentions this Emperor.

² It is more probable that this sum of 310,000,000 denarii (Mommsen, *o. o. cit.* p. 618) represents the entire amount granted by Diocletian to the great cities of the Empire, — πασογ της Πατερον πολεων, says Malalas (*Chron.* xii. 300, *ad ann.* 302). The *Alexandrian Chronicle* mentions also (p. 514) for this same year a distribution in Alexandria of *pans eastrensis*. The triumph of Diocletian was not, as it has been said to be, the last triumph ever witnessed in Rome. Constantius celebrated one in 357, and Honorius another, after the victory of Stilicho over Alaric.

³ Cum liberatem populi Romani ferre non poterat (Lactantius, 17).

with having flung them gold, he scorned to take pains to amuse them. This disdain of his is comprehensible when we read what Ammianus Marcellinus has to say of the frivolity of these men, wholly absorbed in their sanguinary amusements, or shaking the folds of their togas to display their long-fringed sleeves and their tunics, in whose texture were interwoven various forms of animals.¹

The senators were treated with no greater consideration. The ceremony of the installation of the consuls was approaching. It was for the Senate and the city a festival in which the Emperors formerly shared; but Diocletian did not attend it. On the 18th of December² he left Rome, which had not been able to detain him for an entire month, and visited Ravenna, there taking possession for the ninth time of the consular office (304). This triumph and these festivals, which had now brought to men's minds all the successes of his reign, were a matter of policy with the skilled statesman. About to seek, in the remote palace which he had so carefully made ready for himself, that which contemporaries have called the "repose of the Augusti" (*quies Augustorum*),⁴ — which, however, was for him really the carrying out of a deep design, — he had chosen not to retire from the world until he had given this brilliant manifestation which was to immortalize his fame.

From Ravenna he went to Aquileia and Istria, and probably as far as Salona, to make sure that all things were ready for his reception,⁵ and then returned to Nicomedeia in the middle of 304. From this city is dated one of his last rescripts, — on the 28th of August of that year.

Diocletian had been seriously indisposed during this journey. But he was not yet sixty years old, he had a robust constitution,

¹ xiv. 6.

² Laetantius, 17. It is probable that before leaving Rome he caused Maximian to renew in the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus the engagement to abdicate at the same time with himself (*Pan. vet.* vii. 15).

³ The Repose of the Augusti, QVIES AVGG.

⁴ *Pan. vet.* vi. 11, and Eckhel, viii. 14.

⁵ Conjecture authorized by the words of Laetantius, 17: *Per circuitum ripae Istricam Nicomediam venit.* Diocletian, in feeble health and habituated to Eastern climates, was likely in January, 304, to avoid the valley of the Danube, through which certain authorities represent him as passing, — a region subject to cold so extreme that the mighty river is sometimes frozen.



MEDIUM BRONZE.³

and, with his habitual tenacity of purpose, he returned to the city where he had assumed the purple, and where he proposed to lay it off. His illness increased during the winter; all the gods, assailed with prayers for the recovery of him who had protected them, remained deaf to these supplications. On the 15th of December he had a fainting fit; the palace was in tears, and a rumor of his death spread through the city. When this report was contradicted, many refused to believe that he was still alive, thinking that it was designed to conceal the truth until Galerius should arrive, lest there might be an outbreak among the soldiery. The Emperor did not appear again in public until the kalends of March. "He could scarcely be recognized," says Lactantius, "so greatly had he changed; though he had regained his health, he had lost his reason, and never again recovered it for more than a few moments at a time."¹ But Lactantius, his enemy, takes pleasure in showing the persecutor of the Christians deprived of his dignity as a man by the Divine Justice, of his imperial crown by the Caesar whom he had himself made, and the entire edifice he had so laboriously erected falling into ruins over his head. The historian has seen in the secret apartments of the palace Diocletian groaning, with tear-stained face; he has heard the rude language and threats of Galerius, and the humble answers of the old Emperor,—a rhetorical embellishment which certain writers have accepted for historic fact.² This abdication, which Galerius is supposed to have extorted from a feeble and irresolute old man, was one of the conditions of existence of the new political system, which reserved power for the prime of manhood. This Diocletian himself had affirmed on the day when he ordered the sons of the Caesars to be only additional soldiers in the imperial army; and the keenest joy that this valiant mind could have anticipated for his latter

¹ Lactantius, 17: *Demonis enim factus est, ita ut certis horis insaniret, curvis resipisceret.*

² To render this scene less improbable, Lactantius had shown Galerius since the year 297 inflated with pride on account of his victory over Narses, and exclaiming: *Quousque Caesar?* "How long must I remain Caesar?" The skilful rhetorician is mindful of the rule of his art, that great effects must be prepared for long in advance. But he refutes himself when he says later, in chap. xxvi., that Galerius was determined also to abdicate after his *Vicennalia*, — showing that abdication after twenty years of rule was to be regarded as the principle of the new government. Aurelius Victor knows nothing of any enfeeblement of Diocletian: "He renounced the cares of government," says this author, "being in full vigor of body and mind (*valentior curam reipublicae abjexit*)."

days must have been to behold his great institution subsisting without him. He had succeeded in preventing military usurpations by giving himself colleagues who acknowledged his supreme authority. But to secure in the future the peaceable transmission of the supreme power, he had resolved to limit his exercise of it to a period of twenty years, in order by his own example to lay an obligation of unselfishness upon future Augusti, and also to calm the impatience of new Caesars by showing them that the hour of sovereignty would come for them also. Thus was to be made secure the system which had been the great work of his life: succession according to merit taking the place of the principle of heredity or the accident of military favor. We have two decisive proofs that such was really his intention.—the care given for nine years to the construction of his palace at Salona, in a remote corner of the world, far from all public life and business; and the abdication which he had long before compelled the ambitious Maximian to promise. Upon a coin struck on occasion of the abdication, these words are to be read: “To the victorious Fates.” For the pagans, fatality was the supreme will of Jupiter, “Master of Destiny,” and human wisdom was an inspiration from the god. The resolution of the two Emperors was therefore to be attributed to Jupiter himself, *Fatis Victricibus*:¹ and in retiring they obeyed the divine will.

When, in the month of December, 303, Dioecletian had celebrated at Rome his *Vicennalia*, he was in his twentieth year of imperial power; and the year was not completed until the 17th September, 304. The time that he had fixed for his abdication had in fact come; but he waited some months longer, to allow Maximian to enter upon the twentieth year since the date of the latter's appointment as Caesar. By this delay Dioecletian attained the period at which he could rightfully claim from his colleague the fulfilment of the latter's promise.

The Empire at this time was in the enjoyment of a profound peace, which to the imperial ear was not disturbed by the far-off

GOLD COIN.¹

¹ Victorious Destiny, *FATIS VICTRICIBUS* (reverse of a gold coin of Diocletian).

² Eckhel, viii. 6. An inscription found at Carlsburg (*C. I. L.* vol. iii. No. 1,090) calls Jupiter *divinarum humarumque rerum rector fatorumque arbiter*. (Cf. Pausanias, v. 15, in respect to Jupiter *poupayētys*.)

eries of martyred Christians. In the interior, no disorder; from without, no threat of danger. In presence of this well-ordered government and of these securely guarded frontiers, ambitious men held their peace and the Barbarians remained in an attitude of respect and fear. Nothing, therefore, prevented Diocletian from making the experiment, so formidable in an absolute monarchy, of the transmission of the supreme authority.

SEVERUS II.¹

Three miles distant from Nicomedeia, upon a low hill overlooking the city, stood a column surmounted by a statue of Jupiter. It was on this spot that Diocletian had given to Galerius the purple of the Caesars. Hither the old Emperor caused his throne to be brought, and came to sit upon it for the last time. The nobility of the Empire, the officers of the palace, and the representatives of all the legions having been assembled in their order around him, he rose and announced his resolution. His strength, he said, was decreasing, and, after so many labors, repose was needful to him; he gave back to the god whose image glittered above his head that which the god had given him, and he now transmitted the Empire to the Caesars, whose places would thenceforward be filled by the experienced generals Severus and Maximin Daza. The latter, a nephew of Galerius, was present. Diocletian summoned him, and taking off his own purple mantle, laid it upon the young man's shoulders. On the same day, May 1st, 305,² Severus was proclaimed Caesar at Milan by Maximian, and Diocletian. "now Diocles again," says Lactantius, quitted Nicomedeia to seek the seclusion of his palace at Salona.³

MAXIMIN DAZA.²

It was a grand and beautiful scene. This Emperor, who — not like Charles V., in the decline of his power, but in full prosperity, and as yet far short of the limit of his life — resigns the imperial

¹ SEVERVS AVGVSTVS. (Gold coin.)

² Laurelled MAXIMINVS P. F. AVG. (Gold coin.)

³ . . . *Et iterum Diocles factus* (Lactantius, 19). This remark of Lactantius is not more truthful, however, than many other things that he says. Diocles, on the contrary, remained Diocletian, with possession of all imperial honors. Coins struck after the abdication represent him as crowned, and have the legend: *Dominu nostro Diocletiano, beatissimo seniori Augusto*. On others is the following: *Aeterno Augusto, or Providentia deorum, quies augusta*. Maximian withdrew into Lucania.

power that he may thus give solemn sanction to a political system, was a man of distinguished ability. "After him," says an old historian, "the decline of the Empire began, and by degrees Barbarism gained upon it."¹

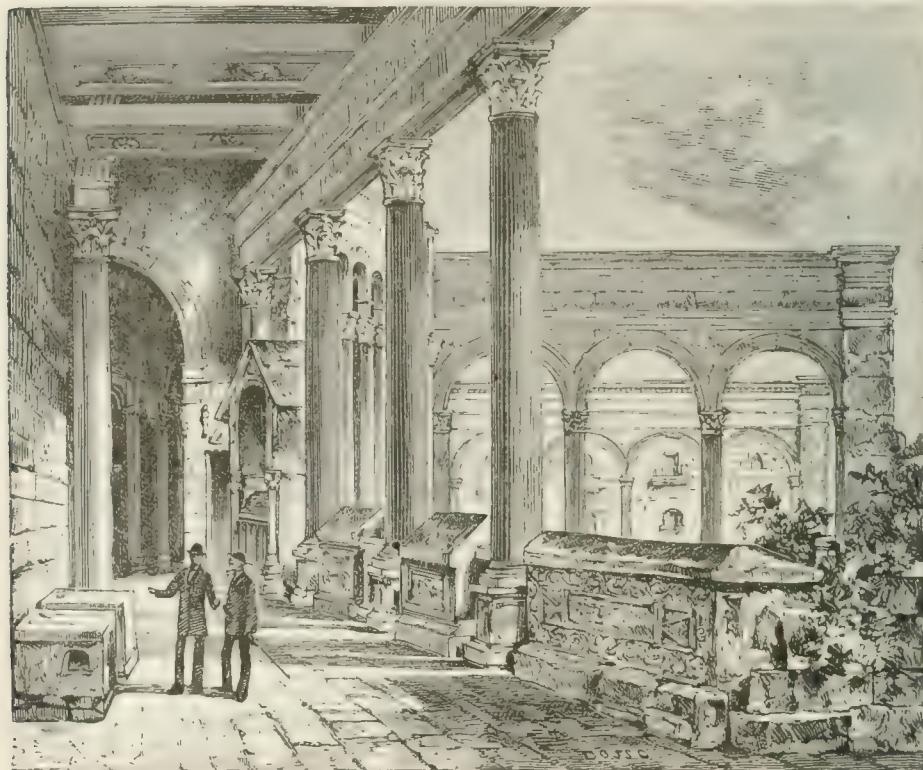
On the shore of one of those beautiful bays with which the Adriatic indents the Dalmatian coast, where the calm water is protected by islands from the angry waves of the open sea, now stands the town of Spalato,² which was once almost completely occupied by the palace of Diocletian. On one side is the sea, with its changing aspects; on the other, wooded hills, vineyards, and villages; and the air is always mild and fresh, except in the burning heats of summer. In this favored scene Diocletian had erected the sumptuous edifice wherein he proposed to end his life near the spot where it began. The vast structure covered a surface of more than eight acres. Its exterior wall, defended at the four corners by huge quadrangular towers, gave admittance, under fortified gateways known as the Gates of Gold, of Iron, of Brass, and of the Sea, to four streets bordered by colonnades of red granite. The old soldier had designed his palace after the likeness of his Empire: seen from without, it was a camp and a fortress. But the interior told of its imperial occupant,—baths, a forum, halls of reception and council, barracks for the guard, and two temples for his favorite divinities, Aesculapius (?) and Jupiter(?) The latter temple, octagonal without and circular within, with arches resting on the columns instead of the architrave placed directly upon capitals, was a prelude to the Byzantine architecture.³ A thick wall, rising from the sea, supported an open gallery five hundred and ninety feet in length, the roof resting on fifty columns:

¹ Zosimus, ii. 7: . . . βιρβαρωθεῖσα [ἡ Ρωμαίων ἀρχή].

² Spalato, corruption of *Salonae palatum*. The stone, almost as beautiful as marble, of which the palace was built, was obtained from the quarries of Tragurium. Much porphyry also and Egyptian granite were employed in the edifice.

³ M. A. Choisy, the learned author of *L'Art de l'air chez les Byzantins*, says very well, p. 152: "It has been customary to date the Byzantine architecture from the fourth century. According to the accredited opinion, Justinian was its originator, and Saint Sophia its first example. In fact, no style of architecture ever comes into existence thus at a fixed date and with a masterpiece as its first work." The author mentions, as examples of the beginnings of Byzantine art in the Empire, two tanks at Constantinople, constructed in the time of Constantine, the palace of Spalato, etc.; and he very justly finds its origin in Assyria. "Byzantine art," he says, "existed from the Roman epoch beside the official architecture, and waited only the decline of classic traditions to make itself conspicuous."

an incomparable *loggia*, whence the view extended beyond the islands over the open sea, at that time crowded with vessels. By great underground passages opening on this side, supplies were brought into the palace and quietly distributed. In the neighborhood was a hunting park; but where was the famous garden which Diocletian cultivated with his own hands, and from which he wrote to Maximian, when the latter besought him to resume the purple: "If you could see the fine vegetables that I raise here, you would



INTERIOR VIEW OF THE TEMPLE OF JUPITER AT SALONA, FROM THE ATLAS OF CASSAS.

never speak to me again of such wearisome tasks"? The place is unknown to us; but the answer lives in history, and men weary of public life delight to quote it.

This dwelling was not that of a philosopher; but Diocletian was not inclined to philosophize. He had done a political action which implies uncommon grandeur of soul; and the sacrifice being made, it pleased him to preserve as a private individual all the magnificence of imperial station. The Temple of Jupiter,

so called, received the daylight only through the door of entrance, and it is a very small building: scholars have been disposed to think that it was a tomb. At the summit of power Diocletian had prepared a stately shelter for his old age; it is quite probable that while in retirement he constructed for his last home a sumptuous tomb.¹

The Emperor passed eight years at Salona, respected by those whose fortune he had made. An inscription of the year 305 calls him "the father of the Emperors." When his baths were inaugurated at Rome, his name was left to the colossal edifice;² and on coins of this period he is called "the eldest of the Augusti" (*Augustus senior*).³ Galerius consulted him in respect to the elevation of Licinius, and in 310 Eumenes extolled in the presence of Constantine the great Emperor whom the new masters of the world revered.⁵ But Diocletian saw the ambitions that he had restrained break out anew; civil wars and murders of Emperors succeed one another; Christianity obtain a legal recognition; his wife, the Empress Prisca, and his daughter Valeria, the widow of Galerius, despoiled of their possessions and confined in a place of exile.⁶ These blows, falling upon the Emperor, the husband, and the father, were not enough to satisfy the enmity of the Christians. They depicted him as steeped in insults and trembling for his life. Constantine throws down his statues, has his name effaced from the public edifices,⁷ and

VALERIA
AUGUSTA.⁴

¹ For a temple, the edifice is remarkably small. 42½ feet in diameter, 69 in height. The columns are but 23 feet high, but are surmounted with a heavy entablature and a second order of pillars 11½ feet in height. On the other hand, tombs were never placed so near dwellings; but Diocletian perhaps was desirous to place his own within the fortifications of his palace. Lanza places the tomb in the Temple of Aesculapius.

² *C. I. L.* vol. vi. No. 1,130: . . . *Seniores Augusti patres imperatorum et Caesarum.*

³ Eckhel, viii. 14.

⁴ VALERIA AVGVSTA, daughter of Diocletian and wife of Galerius. (Gold coin.)

⁵ *Dicitum illum virum . . . quem nostra tantorum principum colunt obsequia privatum . . . multo fugo, fuit' in imperio et nostro regimur laetus umbracu'.* (*Pan. ret. vii. 15.*)

⁶ The two Empresses were decapitated, by order of Licinius, early in the year 315, and their bodies thrown into the sea. A son of Galerius, Candidianus, whom Valeria had brought up tenderly, was at the same time put to death.

⁷ *Saruae recubantur* (Lactantius, 42). Constantine, he says, caused to be destroyed the paintings in which the two Augusti are represented together, overthrew those of their images where the statue of Diocletian formed a group with Maximian's, and effaced the inscriptions which were common to the two. This posthumous proscription was addressed to Maximian, whom Constantine had caused to be murdered. As for the mutilation of the inscriptions

writes him menacing letters;¹ Maximin makes no reply when Diocletian begs, with humble messages, that his daughter be restored to him; and the last days of this mighty monarch are so sad that he poisons himself, or dies by voluntary starvation. The wrath and indignation of the Christians against their persecutor require that his punishment should begin in this present world. Since no man killed him, it must needs be that he kill himself in the midst of all the anguish of despair; thus justice would be done.

DIOCLETIAN.²

The scene is dramatic, and the legend that it embodies lives yet; but Eusebius, a contemporary and an enemy, and Eutropius, an indifferent person, have no knowledge of this sad story. The latter represents him as growing old in honored tranquillity; the former tells of a long illness which, in the end, carried him off.³

In an ordinance published a few days before the death of Diocletian, Constantine still calls him, "Our lord and father;"⁴ and, lastly, he permits the Senate to decree him apotheosis, although the ex-Emperor at Salona was no more than a private individual.⁵ The senators of Rome, protectors of the established religion, took pleasure in protesting against the victory of the Christians by causing their persecutor to be enrolled among the gods. But the act could not be done without consent of the reigning Emperor; it was therefore by the will of Constantine that Diocletian was apotheosized;⁶ upon earth honors to his memory

peculiar to Diocletian (L. Renier, *Inscr. d'Alg.* 108; *C. I. L.* vol. ii. No. 1,439; and Wilmanns, 769A, No. 1,060), we must see in this an act of rage on the part of the Christian populations, avenging themselves upon their persecutor, rather than the execution of an order from government.

¹ Constantine is said to have endeavored to compel him to attend the conference at Milan in 313, and, on the old man's refusal, to have written a letter which decided him to take his own life; the Senate is said to have condemned him to death, etc. (Cf. Tillemont, *Hist. des empereurs*, iv. 54.)

² D[omin]o N[ostro] DIOCLETIANO BEATISSIMO SENIORI AVG[usto]. The reverse: PROVIDENTIA DEORVM QVIES AVG. (Medium bronze.)

³ Praeclaro otio senuit (Eutrop., ix. 28; Euseb., *Hist. eccl.* viii. 17).

⁴ *Codex Theod.* xiii. 10, 2; edict of the kalends of June, 313. Diocletian, not being called *divus*, was still living at that date. It may be inferred from Lactantius (*De Mort. pers.* 35-45) that he died before Maximin (July, 313); consequently a few days after the date of the edict.

⁵ Contigit ei ut, quum privatus obisset, inter Divos referretur (Eutrop., ix. 28).

⁶ Under the Christian Emperors the word *divus* was retained to designate the dead



RUINS OF SELEUCIA (LÉON DELABORDE, VOYAGE EN ASIE MINORE, PLATE 72).

were not lacking: his tomb remained always covered with the imperial mantle.¹

The conqueror of Actium gave the Empire its first form; namely, absolute power, concealed under a republican exterior, with liberal institutions in the cities and provinces. Diocletian undertook to abolish whatever remained of the government of the Caesars, in order to establish in its stead a skilfully organized monarchy whose agents should be everywhere present. The union which had not been made between low and high by means of free institutions, was to be made between high and low by administrative links throughout the whole Empire, and they proved strong enough to keep a portion of it standing for ten centuries. We have seen how much ancient material was employed in the construction of the new edifice; it is always so. In public affairs the successful innovators are those who organize well, rather than those who invent; for the present, in order to stand securely, must begin by resting upon the past.

Emperor. The reign of Dioecletian has given rise to many discussions, into which it would be out of place to enter here; they will be found in various special works, of which some are excellent: Hunzicker, in the *Untersuch. zur röm. Kaisergesch.* of Max Budinger, ii 115-284 (1866); Preuss, *Kaiser Dioecletian*, 1869; Casagrandi, *Dioecleziano*, 1876; Mason, *The Persecution of Dioecletian*, 1876; Coen, *L'Abdicazione di Dioec.*, 1877; Morosi, *L'Abdiz. dell' imp. Dioec.*, 1880; Burekhardt, *Die Zeit Constantins des Grossen*, 1880. For a part of the chronology of this reign there is a learned paper by Mommsen, *Über die Zeitfolge der Verordnungen Dioecletians*, which we have already had occasion to quote.

¹ Amm. Marcellinus relates (xvi. 8) that a certain Danus was, under Constantius, accused of treason for having taken away from Dioecletian's tomb a purple covering (*velamen purpureum*).



TEMPLE OF ROME. BRONZE COIN.

FOURTEENTH PERIOD.

THE CHRISTIAN EMPIRE: CONSTANTINE TO THEODOSIUS
(306–395 A. D.).

CHAPTER CI.

CONSTANTINE, MAXENTIUS, AND LICINIUS (306–324).

I.—SIX EMPERORS AT ONE TIME.

WHILE Diocletian was on his way to Dalmatia, the four new masters of the Empire—the two Augusti, Constantius and Galerius, and the two Caesars, Severus and Maximinus—took possession of the imperial power, under the conditions prescribed to each by the founder of the tetrarchy. The system, therefore, seemed to be firmly established. It had, however, only an outward show of permanence; in order to subsist, it needed at its head a man whose supreme authority would be respectfully accepted, and whose firmness would keep each in his appointed place. Which of the four rulers will be able to fill the place of the recluse of Salona?

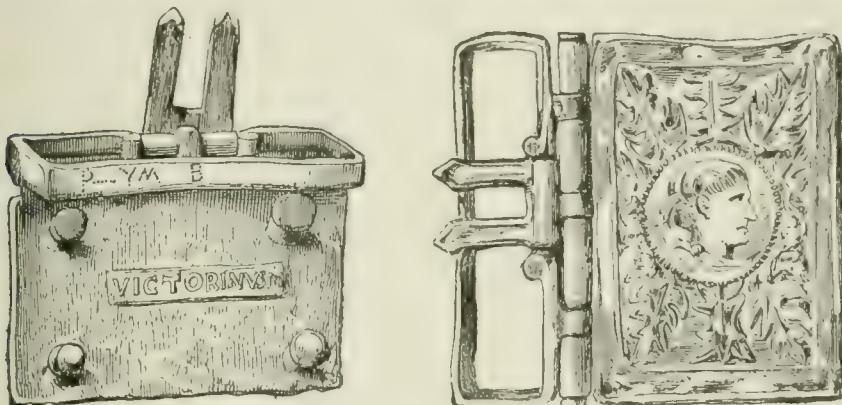
Will it be Constantius Chlorus? He is the senior Augustus, but he has no desire to wield an authority too heavy for his feeble hands: instead of going to Milan or Rome, he chooses to remain at Trèves, thus abandoning to Severus the central post. What cares Constantius—who has already one foot in the grave, and will be dead in a few months—for power? Will it be Galerius? This Emperor deserves a better reputation than he has had;¹

¹ Eutropius (v. 2) says that he was *probe moratus*; and the author of the *Epit.* 40: . . . *inculta agrestique justitia*.



CONSTANTINE CAESAR. STATUE FOUND IN THE BATHS OF
CONSTANTINE AT ROME.

he is an active man, a good soldier, and his twelve years of command give him authority. Trusting to his military talents, Diocletian, in dividing the Empire, has given him a very important share. Maximinus receives only Egypt and Syria, Severus only Italy and Africa; so that from the Taurus to the Alps, Galerius commands the richest provinces, the most warlike populations, and will have more gold and more troops than his colleagues. To him evidently was intrusted the duty of maintaining that wise balance which could be preserved only by incessant vigilance. But he is not far-sighted. Instead of the sagacity which discerns approaching danger, and the firmness which dispels it, he



GOLD BUCKLE WITH THE HEAD OF CONSTANTIUS CHLORUS (?)¹

will manifest anger only: and he will be able to baffle neither the ambition of Constantine, which Diocletian had suspected and held in check, nor that of Maxentius, whose father had been compelled by the great Augustus to keep his unruly son at a distance; and two barrack-revolutions will shortly renew all the public misfortunes.

Diocletian had left in the palace of Nicomedeia the son of Constantius, a young man thirty-one years of age,² skilful in all

¹ The father of Constantine, or perhaps Constantine himself, on a hinged clasp of gold. The inscription in relief on the reverse of the clasp was made with a stamp: it doubtless is the name of the owner: VICTORINVS (*Cabinet de France*, No. 2,689).

² Flavius Valerius Aurelius Constantinus, born in 273 or the following year. All his successors in the fourth century, Maximus alone excepted, took his gentile name, Flavius. See the *Tituli domus imperatoria* of Wilmanns.

manly exercises, brave, and handsome.¹ To these exterior advantages, which delight the crowd and the soldiery, he united a keen and crafty mind, unscrupulous in the matter of useful lies or what he judged to be necessary murders, even were the victim a child; but, also, a ready perception of the best means to serve his ambition, the talent to use them well, and that resolute will which neutralizes contrary influences. As a general, famous for rapid combinations, he will preserve as a ruler the prudent reserve taught to him by the twelve years he spent as hostage at an Asiatic court.²

This son of an Augustus had enjoyed hitherto only the honors of the military tribuneship; and now while Constantius was master of the West, he remained the suspected guest of his father's secret enemy. Constantius called his son to him by letters, constantly more and more urgent. Diocletian, no doubt, had received similar letters and had made no reply to them, being unwilling to encourage hopes of hereditary succession,—an idea diametrically opposed to his elective system, and to the conception formed by the Romans of their Republican magistracies, and even of the imperial office, for which there had always been the semblance of an election. Galerius, less prudent, yielded to the solicitations of Constantine; he gave the young man leave to depart, and furnished him with the authorization necessary in order to employ the public post. This time again Lactantius relates what he has seen, or believes that he has seen, in the mind of Galerius,—the Emperor's regrets at having yielded, his determination to retract his promise on the morrow, or to gain time that he may send to Severus an order to arrest the fugitive as he is crossing the Alps. It was late in the afternoon, says Lactantius; the Emperor advised Constantine, as he gave him the authorization, not to make use of it until the next day,—hoping to find meanwhile some excuse

¹ He is said to have killed a Sarmatian warrior in single combat, and to have destroyed a monstrous lion. This lion is without doubt the ancestor of the one which Pepin the Short vanquished. Legend shows us Constantine as an invincible hero, and Galerius as a cruel tyrant, who, to rid himself of a future rival, exposed his colleague's son to dangers of all kinds. *In insidiis saepe juvenem appetivitat. . . . foris illum objecerat* (Lactant., *De Morte pers.* 24). For the personal description of Constantine, cf. Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, i. 19. The historian saw him in Palestine with Diocletian.

² See p. 366.

for preventing the journey, or at least the opportunity to despatch a warning to Severus. But as soon as Galerius had fallen asleep after supper, Constantine made his escape; and lest he should be pursued, seized and carried off all the horses from the first stations of the imperial post.¹ Galerius slept till noon of the following day. On awaking, he sends for Constantine, learns that the latter has gone, and orders couriers to be sent out in all haste to recall him. But Constantine is already far on his journey; the post-stables are empty; and the Emperor "cannot refrain from tears."

Lactantius enjoys these pictures, which are made according to the rules of the schools. But I confess to incredulity as to the Emperor's tears. I have no confidence in this flight which might so easily have been prevented, in this hope that Severus would close the Alpine passes, after Galerius had left open the gates of Nicomedeia. And how heavy the Emperor's sleep in this night which must have been one of so much anxiety! But the rhetorician had need of these fifteen or twenty hours to place Constantine beyond pursuit, and of this dramatic narrative to secure to his hero the favor always gained by the innocent captive who breaks his chains. Constantine's history thus at a thousand points skirts the domain of legend, because it was necessary to transfigure the ruler by whose agency Christianity triumphed. Lactantius has not observed that in making Constantine a rebel, he places to his account the consequences of this usurpation. The noble but impracticable system of Diocletian was, in fact, about to perish; civil war to return; with it murders and destruction, and for the Empire a period of anarchy which lasted eighteen years.

The eloquence of those times was so entirely regardless of truth that another rhetorician — and a pagan, in this case — says of the journey: "They were not the horses of the public post which brought the prince from the ends of the world, but it was a celestial chariot, drawn by divine steeds."²

Constantine joined his father at Boulogne, and went with him into Britain. "He did not go," says Eumenius, "to seek

¹ In later accounts Constantine is represented as having hamstrung the horses that he left behind him (*Zosimus*, ii. 8).

² *Pan. vet.* vii. 7.

trophies of victory in the sacred island, nearer to heaven than lands situated in the midst of the continents; he had heard divine voices calling him to the extremities of the world. Before



DIVO CONSTANTIO AVG.²

taking his place among the celestial powers, he desired to contemplate Oceanus, the father of the gods, and in those regions to see a day almost without night."¹ The Augustus of the Western provinces had not the heated imagination of the rhetorician. Instead of a pilgrimage to the Fortunate Isles, he had destined for his son an expedition which would give him an opportunity to make the acquaintance of the troops; successes easily gained served as a pretext for largesses which completed the conquest of the soldiers' hearts. When Constantius died, a few days later, in the city of Eboracum (York), July 25, 306, the legions proclaimed his son Augustus.³ Crocus, a king of the Alemanni, who was in command of the auxiliary corps, distinguished himself by the ardor of his zeal for the new Emperor.⁴

In assuming the title of Augustus, Constantine had gone too fast and too far. From the moment when Galerius had authorized his departure, the latter had certainly foreseen, and accepted in advance, the inevitable results which the health of Constantius Chlorus gave ground for expecting. There was reason to fear that on the death of the Western Augustus some ambitious man would draw away the legions of these remote provinces, as Carausius had done twenty years earlier. To be in a position to thwart all designs of usurpation, Constantine had been sent to his

¹ *Pan. vet.* vii. 8.

² Laurelled head of Constantius Chlorus, on a medium bronze.

³ The Senate placed Constantius among the *divi*, — *Divo Constantio Aug.* (Eckhel, viii. 32). Eumenius (*Pan. vet.* vii. 8) and Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* viii. 13) speak of this *consecratio*. The sons of his second marriage were as yet children, the eldest being only thirteen years of age. In preparing the way for the accession of Constantine, the Augustus of the Gauls hoped to secure the throne in his own family, and give a protector to his other children, who were not yet of an age to defend themselves. Constantius was the author of a law, important in its results, declaring that donations were not valid unless they had been declared in the curia (*si actis inserta non essent*). It was also necessary that wills should be inscribed there. In 397 Honorius speaks of this as an ancient usage (*Codex*, vi. 23, 18, and *Codex Theod.* iii. 51). The curia thus became, in civil matters, an office of registration, and as such it survived the invasion.

⁴ *Epit.* 41.

father with promises, but without the imperial title, that the constitution should not be violated, there being as yet no vacancy among the Emperors. Instead of awaiting his elevation by legal procedure to the rank of Caesar, Constantine took advantage of a military tumult; and the soldiers, delighted to resume the lucrative part of king-makers, promptly bestowed upon him the desired title.

According to custom, Constantine sent to the Emperor his image crowned with laurel, and he reported the event to Galerius in modest terms, deplored the impatience of the soldiers, which had made it impossible for him to await the recognition of his rights by the legal head of the Empire.¹ Lactantius asserts that Galerius was at first disposed to throw into the fire the image, the letter, and the messenger; he calmed himself, however, accepted the apology, but conceded to the favored candidate of the British legions only the title of Caesar, and the fourth place among the Emperors.² Severus was raised to the second place, with the title of Augustus; Maximinus remained in the third, as first Caesar. In this situation Constantine showed that he knew how to mitigate boldness by prudence; he accepted the position assigned him. He would, in fact, have declared himself a rebel, had he kept the title the soldiery had given him, and he would have drawn upon himself the forces of all the other Emperors, as happened the year after to Maxentius.

The tetrarchy, for a moment imperilled, seemed to be again firmly established. But why should the son of Maximian, the son-in-law of Galerius,³ be more unselfish than the son of Constantius? After his father's abdication, Maxentius had retired to a villa in the neighborhood of Rome. In the great city much silent displeasure was fermenting; the Senate, without political authority, the praetorians, without military importance, the people, without amusements or largesses, detested the Emperors, who lived far away from them. A circumstance increased the exasperation,—Galerius ordered a new census, a sort of revision of the government register, designed to render taxation more equal, by bringing into their place as tax-payers those who had

¹ Such, at least, is the theory maintained by Eumenius (*Pan. ret.* vii. 8).

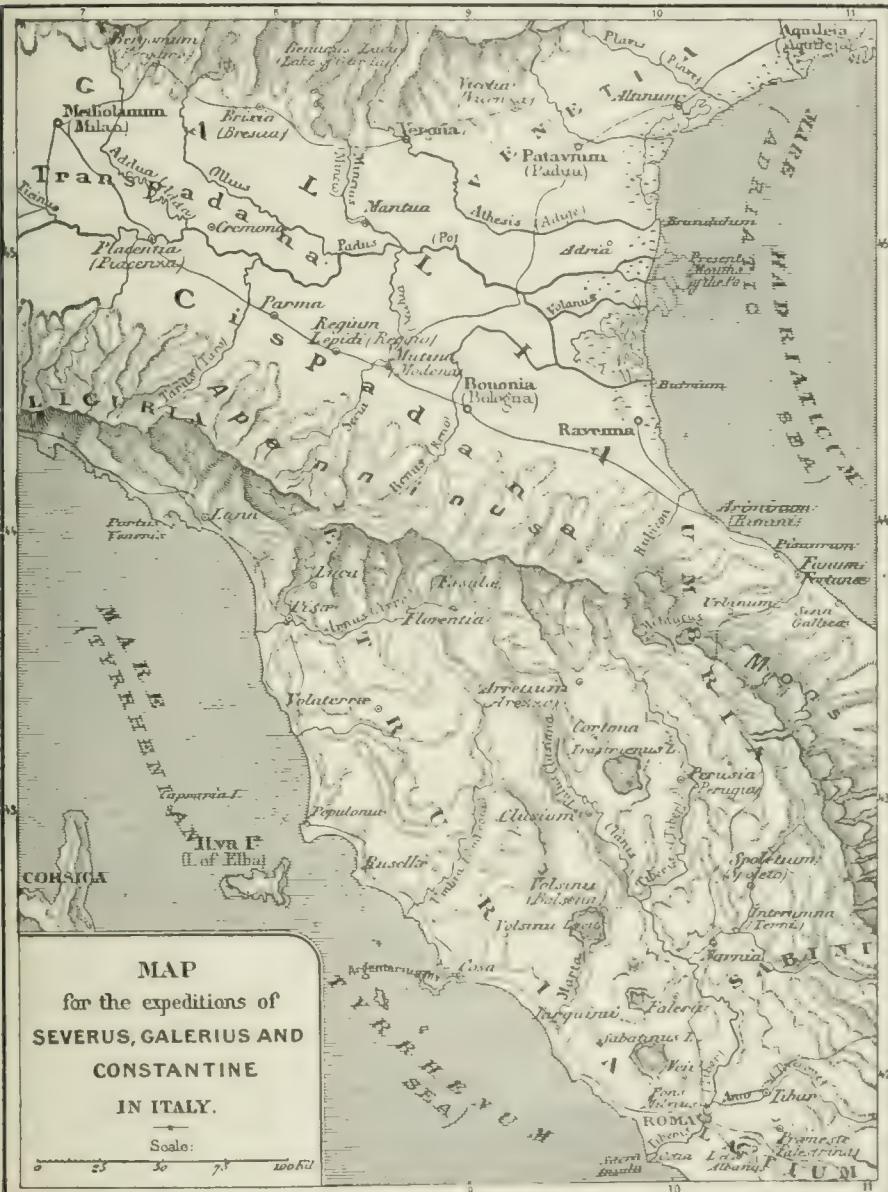
² Lactant., *De Morte pers.* 25.

³ *Bull. épigr. de la Gaule*, i. 108.

escaped from it, as the *plebs urbana* lately exempted from the capitation-tax, or those who had never been in it, as the Italians, for five hundred years free from the land-tax. Diocletian had annulled this latter privilege, and it may have been for the execution of this decree that Galerius ordered returns of persons and estates not only in Italy, but throughout the Empire, and even in Rome itself.¹ The mistress-city of the world fallen to the condition of a stipendiary,—what a disgrace! Riot breaks out against this insolent Dacian who dares subject to tribute the heirs of Augustus and of Trajan. People and praetorians unite, and seal their alliance with the blood of Abellius, the prefect of the city. But they need a leader. Maxentius, whose hand and whose wealth were in this riot, is proclaimed Emperor (Oct. 28, 306). He calls his father Maximian to come to him, and the latter, less wise than Diocletian, leaves his retreat; he again assumes the purple, amid the acclamations of the Senate and the people, and Rome has six Emperors. This number was to be quickly reduced, for it was a revolt, changing the established order, to the detriment of the legitimate rulers.

Severus was an Illyrian, a soldier of fortune, as all the Emperors for the last forty years had been, but a man not made for such a dangerous post, to which he should never have ascended, since he knew not how to defend himself in it. He had not as yet had time to gain the confidence of the troops and make sure of their fidelity. Galerius despatched him to Rome to overthrow the usurper. Rashly entering the narrow peninsula, without having made preparation for safe retreat in case of disaster, he arrived before the ancient city with troops already gained over to the general who had long been their leader. The defection began with a corps of Mauretanian soldiers, whom Maximian had not long before brought back from Africa. The praetorian prefect Anulinus persuaded the rest, and Severus fled, almost alone, to Ravenna, where he was at once besieged. The place was strong, and, with the Adriatic fleet, Severus remained master of the sea, and con-

¹ Lactantius (*De Morte pers.* 23) describes with ludicrous terror the operation of the *censitores*, which was very simple, habitual, and in the interest of all, tax-payers and government alike, with the sole exception of the *plebs urbana*, from whom Galerius withdrew the exemption from the capitation-tax accorded by Diocletian.



sequently at liberty to go to meet the reinforcements which Galerius would not fail to send him. But, his mind distracted by these sudden disasters, he believed himself surrounded by traitors, and listening to the crafty proposals of Maximian, he surrendered, laying down the purple which less than two years before the latter had bestowed upon him (February or March, 307). He expected to be honorably treated. Being carried captive to Rome, and imprisoned in a villa on the Appian Way, he there received the order to relieve his conquerors of their last anxiety ; the choice was left him of the manner of his death. He had his veins opened, and went to share the tomb of Gallienus, another assassinated Emperor. His son, Severianus, also met a violent death a few years later. These murders of Emperors, following one another almost uninterruptedly during a half century, makes us appreciate in contrast the tranquil grandeur of the reign of Diocletian.

Maxentius remained master of Italy, but Galerius was preparing to avenge Severus and dethrone his daughter's husband. What would now be the conduct of the sovereign of the Gallic provinces ? Maximian came to ask this question of Constantine. He crossed the Alps to meet him, and proposed an alliance, offering

¹ Colossal statue of Greek marble; this has the original antique head (Palazzo Odescalchi). — Clarac, pl. 940, No. 2,525).



THE EMPEROR MAXIMIAN.¹

the hand of his daughter, the beautiful Fausta, and the title of Augustus. Constantine accepted both, and the marriage was celebrated at Arles, "the Gallic Rome,"¹ with great magnificence; in return he promised his friendship. He was very decided in giving nothing more, and in awaiting further developments. Events followed each other rapidly. Galerius, entering Italy with the Illyrian legions, advanced undisturbed as far as Narnia, sixty miles from Rome. At his approach the cities had closed their gates, the country population had escaped to the hills, and of the entire region he possessed only the space covered by his camp. To Italy Maxentius was the national ruler, while the Augustus of the Oriental provinces appeared to them a stranger, an enemy. To advance, in the midst of universal disaffection, as far as the great city, which by a solid wall Aurelian had protected against assault, was a rash act, whose peril the old soldier clearly discerned. He had not the material for a siege,—neither the provisions nor the

engines; and he also asked himself what Constantine was intending to do. A Gallic army coming across the Alps could easily shut him up in the peninsula; he dared not advance farther, and after a vain attempt at negotiations he retreated upon Illyricum,

DIOCLETIAN.²

ravaging Italy as a barbaric chief might have done.

The Empire had fallen back into extreme confusion. To restore order, Galerius had recourse to the wisdom of Diocletian; he invited the old Emperor to meet him at Carnuntum — a fortified

¹ Ausonius, *Clar. Urb.* vii. They had already been betrothed, with the consent of Constantius, if we may believe a passage of Julian (*Disc.* i. 6). A panegyrist relates that in a picture exhibited in the palace of Aquileia, *Fausta, pulla dirino decore venerabilis*, was represented offering to the young Constantine a helmet of gold glittering with diamonds (*Pan. vet.* vi. 6). Diocletian opposed this marriage, which would have caused too many hopes to spring up. When it took place, in 307, Constantine found himself the brother-in-law of his mother-in-law, his father having married an elder daughter of Maximian. Constantine already had, by a concubine, a son, Crispus (*Zosimus*, ii. 20; *Zonaras*, xiii. 2). See p. 366, note 1. The title of Augustus seems to have been assumed by Constantine, March 31, 307.

² Coin of Diocletian struck after his abdication. D. N. DIOCLETIANO FELICISSIMO SEN. AVG. On the obverse, a laurelled head of Diocletian. On the reverse, PROVIDENTIA DEORVM QVIES AVG. Two women standing, one with the right hand raised, the other holding a branch and a sceptre. (Medium bronze.)

position whither the legions had been summoned, probably by some menacing attitude of the German tribes. Maximian, driven out of Rome by his son, whom he had sought to depose by instigating the praetorians against Maxentius, hastened to this rendezvous of the Emperors. An old comrade in arms of Galerius,—like himself the son of a peasant, but reported to be a descendant of the Emperor Philip,—Licinius, was already there. The discussions at this imperial council have not been preserved to us. We may, perhaps, attribute to Diocletian the double idea of accepting what had taken place, by leaving the provinces to the usurper, and at the same time protesting against the usurpation by giving Licinius the title of Augustus, with the government of the Empire and the second rank in the Empire (Nov. 11, 307).¹

The Caesar of Syria and Egypt, Maximin, was exasperated at seeing a man who was neither Caesar nor akin to the imperial family obtain the precedence over himself. At the beginning of the year 308 he caused himself to be proclaimed Augustus by his troops, notwithstanding the decided opposition of Galerius, who, compelled to allow his nephew to remain in possession of that title, could not refuse it to Constantine. There were therefore four Augusti legally recognized as such throughout the Empire; a fifth, Maxentius, was so in Italy only: and the sixth, Maximian, wandered up and down, with his imperial purple and his restless ambition, without money, without an army, without provinces. To obtain all that he needed, he conspired against his son-in-law, set in circulation a rumor of the latter's death on an expedition

¹ It will be remembered that Galerius allowed Constantine only the title of Caesar. The edict of 311, in the text of Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* viii. 17), gives the second rank to Constantine, and neither Maximin nor Maxentius is named in it; this part of the text was arranged, therefore, to give Constantine the precedence over Licinius. Lactantius asserts that in 312 the Senate gave the first rank to Constantine. It is possible that after his victory over Maxentius, Constantine caused a senatus-consultum to this effect to be issued. By itself, the Senate did and could do nothing; but it was easy for a conqueror to set this old machine at work for a moment, and in the transcription of the edict of 311, Eusebius followed the order most favorable to his hero. In respect to the omission of the names of Maximin and Maxentius, Tillemont (*Hist. des Empereurs*, iv. 416) believes there is an error of the copyists. It is more probable that in giving the edict of toleration, which Lactantius declares to have been issued in the names of all the Emperors (*communi titulo*), Eusebius purposely omitted the name of him who six months after violated it, and also of him who was conquered at the Milvian Bridge. Official documents were not, in those days, papers scrupulously transcribed.

against the Franks, and seizing the military chest, which had been left in Arles, incited to insurrection the troops in Narbonensis. On news of this, Constantine hastened to the scene of action with the greatest promptness; he showed himself to the soldiery, who at once returned to their allegiance; and Maximian, who had taken refuge at Marseilles, was given up to him (308). The latter lived for some time at the court of his son-in-law, deprived of the imperial honors, and impatient at his humble position. Did he betray a secret displeasure, from which Constantine freed himself by a sentence of death, or shall we accept the tragic story which is told by Lactantius.—from whom nothing seems hid, who sees in the darkness, and hears what is whispered in imperial ears? Listen to his story. Maximian frames new plots; in a secret interview with his daughter, he essays by prayers and caresses to persuade her to betray her husband; he promises her one more worthy of her, and asks her only to leave open the door of the room where the Emperor sleeps, and to remove the guards who usually are stationed before it. Fausta relates all to Constantine. The latter perceives, in his father-in-law's words, a plan of murder, and to take the criminal in the act, he orders a eunuch to take his place for the night in the imperial couch. In the darkness Maximian arises and makes his way to the spot. All

things seem propitious to his designs; the guards are few or remote. To those who meet him, he says that an important revelation has just been made him in a dream, and he is hastening to tell it to his son-in-law. He enters the imperial bedroom, stabs the eunuch, and, rejoicing in his crime (*gloriabundus*), comes out exclaiming, “The Emperor is dead!” But Constantine appears with his guards; he points to the dead body, while the assassin



TOMB OF MAXIMIAN.¹

stands silent and dismayed; he permits the latter to choose what death he shall die: and the old Emperor strangles himself: “*Nodum informis leti trabe nectit ab alta.*”²

¹ Tomb of Maximian upon a coin of Maxentius (from Parker's *Fotum Romanorum*).

² Lactant., *op. cit.* 30, quoting Vergil, *Aen.* xii. 603.

The restless spirit and misguided ambition of Maximian had thrown him into intrigues attested by the two plots.—at Rome against his son, at Arles against his son-in-law.¹ But the story of his last moments is very strange, and seems to have been copied from some Arab tale. We shall probably not be far from the truth if we believe that this narrative was devised to conceal the odiousness of the murder of an old man who, abandoned by all the world, was in no way to be feared, and whose age and long services ought to have been respected by the husband of his daughter (310).²

No man has ever killed his successor; and it is with institutions as with men, those which are of the future always triumph over those which belong to the past. Galerius, not having been able to destroy Christianity, confessed himself conquered by putting a stop to the persecution, which, always a bad thing, was besides useless unless it were general. But Constantius and his

MAXIMIAN.⁴

son had promised the Gallic provinces exemption from it; Maxentius did not continue it in the provinces of Italy and Africa;³ and only Maximian in Syria and Egypt, still ordered the execution of Christians. On April 30, 311, Galerius issued an edict, in which he said: “For the general welfare of our subjects and for the preservation of our authority we had resolved to re-establish the discipline of our ancestors. We desired to bring

MAXENTIUS.⁵

¹ Zosimus, ii. 11, and *Pan. ret.* vii. 14 and 15.

² Eusebius, in his *Life of Constantine*, avoids all mention of this murder: and in his *Ecclesiastical History*, contents himself with saying that, according to a prophecy, Maximian strangled himself. Eumenius (*Pan. ret.* vii. 20) also speaks of suicide. This was the official version: . . . *Nec se dignum vita justificavit, cum per te facaret ut ciceret*. Aur. Victor (*Cae.* 40) says, *jure interierat*, and the author of the *Epitome*, that Constantine caused him to be strangled (*fractis laqueo cervicibus*). While Maxentius was alive, it was for the interest of Constantine to have it believed that Maximian died by suicide, which permitted the apotheosis of this somewhat unworthy personage, to whom an inscription (*Itin. epigr. de la Gaule*, i. 108) and coins (Eckhel, viii. 27) give the title of *divus*. After the battle of the Milvian Bridge, Constantine caused his father-in-law's monuments to be thrown down, and his name defaced from the milestones (Euseb., *Hist. eccl.* viii. 13, and *Recue archéol.* July, 1883, p. 39 *et seq.*). The *Epitome* represents him as only sixty years of age.

³ Euseb., *Hist. eccl.* viii. 14.

⁴ DIVO MAXIMIANO SEN[ATORI] FORT[issimori] IMP[eratori]. Laureled head, on small bronze coin. (Cohen, No. 323, and Eckhel, viii. 27).

⁵ MAXENTIVS P. F. AVG. (Gold coin.)

back to a better mind the Christians, who had the temerity and the presumption to oppose the established rites of religion. . . . These persons have been exposed to great dangers, and many of them have suffered death. Since they persist in their folly, our benevolence towards our subjects is such that we now permit them to hold their ordinary assemblies. This indulgence will oblige them to pray to their god on our behalf." Thus ended the era of the martyrs. But the wild beast that is in the human heart did not die with the gods who had so savagely defended themselves. The men yesterday persecuted will to-morrow be themselves the persecutors, and religious animosities will shed a thousand times more blood than has up to this time been poured forth.

A month later Galerius, attacked with a frightful disease—which Eusebius and Lactantius describe with complacency, died at Nicomedeia, before attaining that twentieth year of Empire which, faithful to the order established by Diocletian, he intended to signalize by his abdication.¹

II.—DEFEAT AND DEATH OF MAXENTIUS AND OF MAXIMIN DAZA (311–313).

Two Emperors have now disappeared from the scene; four remain. But this is no longer the tetrarchy of Diocletian; all bear

the title of Augustus, and there is no subordination among them. The Empire is torn into four hostile kingdoms,—into five, even; for Alexander, the governor of Africa, was proclaimed Augustus by the army, and recognized by the cities which had refused to receive the images of Maxentius (308). The Barbarians not having yet recovered from the salutary alarm caused them by

Diocletian, the new Emperors were at liberty to turn their strength against each other, and for twelve years the provinces were the scene of civil wars.

Hostilities were on the point of being declared between Licinius and Maximin Daza in respect to the inheritance of Galerius; but



THE USURPER
ALEXANDER.²

¹ Lactant., *D. Morte pers.* 20.

² Bronze coin.

an agreement accepted by the former left to the latter the whole of Asia, the Bosphorus separating the two Empires. War, averted in the East, broke out, however, almost immediately in the West.

The Frankish youth, disgusted with peace, had fallen upon Gaul; Constantine easily defeated these adventurers, and exposed to wild beasts in the amphitheatre of Trèves his prisoners, among them the two chiefs. This execution caused the formation of a league of many Frankish and Alemannic tribes: an impetuous attack of the Romans soon broke this fragile tie. All the dis-



RUINS OF THE AMPHITHEATRE AT TRÈVES.

tricts occupied by the Brueteri were given up to devastation, the villages were burned, the cattle driven away, and the captives sold or thrown to the beasts.—cruelties which did not seem to promise one neophyte to the Church, any more than did the Frankish games,—a purely pagan solemnity instituted by Constantine in memory of his successes, and for a long time maintained.¹ The reorganization of the flotilla of the Rhine, and the construction of a permanent bridge over the river, announced to the Barbarians that Constantine was determined to have free entrance into their

¹ *Ludorum celebrationes deorum festa sunt* (*Lactant., Inst. div.* vi. 20).

country.¹ In the interior of the provinces his administration was able and useful: the Christians were not interfered with, and in 310 he worthily celebrated his *quinquennalia* by remitting to the populations under his sway the *reliqua* due on the taxes since his accession. Eumenius had represented to him that the land no longer gave back what it cost, and that the farmers were everywhere abandoning their profitless industry; and at the entreaty of the Aeduian orator the Emperor reduced from 32,000 to 25,000 the taxable units, *capita*, of the territory of Autun,²—which was equivalent to reducing the land-tax nearly one fourth. He must have done the same in other cities, for the success obtained by Eumenius could not have failed to stimulate the efforts of rhetoricians, from the schools of which this orator was the director. At Trèves he rebuilt the walls, constructed a circus, basilicas, a forum, a praetorium,³—monumental gifts which gratified the population and gave them employment, and must have been supplemented by financial gifts.

In Italy, on the contrary, Maxentius appears to have followed in the footsteps of the worst of the Roman tyrants. The man whom Constantine overthrew is accused by the victor's courtiers of every vice,—profligacy, violence, and cruelty; and we have no reason to doubt them, since the pagan authors, Zosimus, Eutropius, and Victor condemn him, and Julian excludes him from the banquet of the Caesars.⁴ He repressed with great harshness the revolt in Africa; Alexander was put to death (311); Carthage and Cirta were sacked, the country given up to pillage, many citizens executed, and many more deprived of their possessions. At Rome, a saturnalia of crime,—noble matrons dishonored, senators plundered,⁵ sometimes put to death on charge of treason, that their

¹ It is believed that this bridge, built near Cologne, lasted till the reign of the Emperor Otho I. (Wietersheim, *Völkerwanderung*, iii. 175). Remains of piles are seen in the bed of the Rhine, opposite Mayence; but it is a matter of doubt whether these were the work of the Romans or of Charlemagne.

² *Pan. ret.* viii. 10. See p. 396.

³ *Ibid.* viii. 22.

⁴ Zosimus (ii. 15) says of Maxentius: *μετὰ πάσης ὀμότητος τε καὶ ἀσελγείας.* However, Lampridius, in promising Constantine to write the history of Licinius, Severus, Alexander (the African usurper), and Maxentius, says that he will do *ita ut nihil eorum virtute derogatur* (*Heliog.* 35).

⁵ Aur. Viet. (*Caes.* 40) seems to attribute to Maxentius the establishment of the *follis senatorius*,—a tax paid by the senators outside of their land-tax, which was regulated by

entire fortune might be confiscated; but to the soldiers the utmost license, even to the degree that once they were suffered to attack the populace.¹ Accordingly, secret solicitations soon came from Italy to Constantine, who, on his part, had personal wrongs to avenge.²

After the murder of Maximian, Maxentius had affected great zeal for his father's memory; he had thrown down the statues of Constantine, and concluded an alliance with the Egyptian Augustus;³ whereupon the Gallie Emperor made alliance with Licinius, giving the latter in marriage Constantia, his sister. Finally, Maxentius was making great preparations for war, gathering a powerful army, with the avowed purpose of subjugating Gaul and Illyria; he is said to have had 200,000 men, and Constantine half that number. These figures are, however, extremely large; the Roman armies were not usually so numerous.⁴ After providing for the defence of the Rhine and of Britain, Constantine crossed Mont Cenis⁵ with 25,000 men, consisting of veterans and Barbarian auxiliaries. This army contained a small number of Christians, who in the son of Constantius recognized a future protector, and many pagans whose only religion was victory; a chief who had hitherto been fortunate could rely upon their devotion. Con-

stantine. The Emperor, as a member of the Senate, paid also the *follis senatorius*. But this was a foolish affectation of senatorial equality; in reality he paid nothing, since what he paid, he paid to himself.

¹ Euseb., *Hist. eccl.* viii. 14; *Pan. vet.* ix. 4 and 14: . . . *Ut praetorianis caudem vulgi quendam annoverit* (Aur. Viet., *Caes.* 40). According to Zosimus (ii. 13), while a fire was destroying the Temple of Fortune, the populace murdered a soldier because he scoffed loudly at the burning goddess. His comrades, to avenge him, attacked the citizens, of whom a great number perished, and "they would have destroyed the city if Maxentius had not checked their fury."

² Eusebius congratulates Constantine on having brought on this war (*Life of Constant.* i. 26), and Eutropius lets it be understood that he instigated it: . . . *Bellum civile commovit* (x. 4).

³ Medals attest the union of these two Augusti, called by Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* viii. 14) brothers in wickedness.

⁴ Zosimus, ii. 15. The author of the Ninth Panegyric (sect. 3) who, to fill his office well, was bound to represent the Italian army as formidable, and that of the Gallie Emperor as comparatively small, gives Maxentius *centum milia hominum*, and Constantine *ix. quart'a parte*. "Thou hadst," he says, "fewer soldiers than Alexander led against the Persians" (*Ibid.* 5). Alexander's army consisted of 30,000 foot, and 4,500 horse.

⁵ The highway from Lyons into Italy led over Mont Cenis. Constantine, arriving from the North, must have taken this route; thence he could fall upon Susa and Turin. He would not have chosen the road over the Cottian Alps — which some writers believe him to have taken — unless his army had come from Southern Gaul.

stantine had given them booty; he had also given them what men call "glory;" and occasionally he said manly words, which went to

the hearts of the warriors. To him is due that legal provision which permits the soldier, dying on a campaign, to make his will "in any way possible, were it on the field of battle, by writing his wishes with his blood (*literis sanguine suo rutilantibus*), on his buckler and the scabbard of his sword, or on the sand with the point of his weapon."¹ The officers did not share in the confidence of their leader; they dreaded the war, remembering the two unsuccessful expeditions of Severus and Galerius: moreover,



CONSTANTINE.²

aruspices had been unfavorable.³ But Constantine intended to conduct this expedition better than his predecessors had done theirs;

¹ *Codex*, vi. 21, 15, anno 334. The words are Constantine's; but the right to make such a will had been established by the early Emperors, for the text is preceded by these words: *Sicut juris rationibus licuit*.

² Agate bust, 9½ centim. in height, with base of silver-gilt, 17 centim. (*Cabinet de France*, No. 287.) The workmanship of this curious object fixes its date in the fourth century. Before the Revolution of 1789, it adorned the tip of the *bâton* of the choir-leader of the Sainte-Chapelle, and was in turn considered as a representation of Saint Louis, Titus, and Valentinian III. More recently it has been believed to represent Constantine the Great. (Cf. Chabouillet, *Catal. général*, etc., p. 55.)

³ *Contra haruspicum monita (Pan. Const.)*.

he was sure of his troops, and the sympathy that he knew existed towards him in Italy promised assistance which had been denied to the two Augusti.

Susa was captured by a surprise; a cavalry engagement gave him Turin and Milan; and another, near Brescia, made him master of the entire Lombard plain. The second gate of Italy, that which opened the road to Illyria by way of the Julian Alps, was better guarded. Maxentius had feared an attack from Licinius; and judging it would be more formidable than the attempt made by Constantine, he had sent troops into Venetia with his praetorian prefect, the brave Pompeianus, who took up a position at Verona. The Adige, a deep and rapid stream, protected this place; but Constantine crossed it by a sudden advance, and surrounded the city. Before all the avenues were closed, Pompeianus effected his escape; he gathered all the troops scattered through the province, and returned to offer battle. He was defeated and slain; Verona, Aquileia, and Modena opened their gates.¹ In a few days there was not an enemy left in the valley of the Po, and thence Constantine could give assistance to Licinius, or call the latter to his aid. His army, rendered confident by success, refreshed and well fed in these luxuriant regions, was ready to follow him anywhere. With extreme military sagacity, he had not yielded to the temptation to advance straight upon Rome as soon as the road to the city was open to him; he gave himself, in the northern part of the peninsula, a solid base of operations, as fifteen centuries later Bonaparte did when he advanced from Montenotte to Verona, writing to the Directory that the conquest of Italy must be made in the valleys of the Po and the Adige.

During this victorious march Maxentius remained in Rome, consulting the Sibylline Books, which replied, with the habitual prudence of oracles, that the enemy of Rome would certainly perish. Deceived by the failure of the two preceding invasions, he believed that the Roman Campagna would be the tomb of the Gallie army, as it had been of the Illyrian army, and that his own troops, covered by the Tiber, resting upon the wall of Aurelian, and fed by fertile provinces, would receive the shock in an impregnable

position. But by going to meet his adversary he turned all these advantages against himself. He threw a bridge of boats across the Tiber adjacent to the Milvian Bridge, then went across to offer battle with the river at his back, and for his retreat only two narrow issues. A hot charge from the Gallic cavalry threw terror into these improvised legions, and the greatest confusion followed; all ran to the bridges and crowded upon them. The stone bridge,



RUINS OF THE CIRCUS OF MAXENTIUS.

was only as wide as a Roman highway, and was almost instantly blocked; the wooden bridge gave way and precipitated all who were upon it into the water, Maxentius among them, whom the weight of his armor or the grasp of drowning soldiers carried down (Oct. 28, 312). Common language is not enough for Eusebius to relate the success of Constantine; he needs the burning words of Moses against the Egyptian Pharaoh: "Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty

waters. . . . And Miriam answered [the women], Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea."

The conqueror made a triumphal entrance into Rome; behind his chariot, as a trophy, was borne the ghastly head of Maxentius, and after the ceremony it was sent into Africa, to be there exhibited.¹ In the action the praetorians alone had fought bravely; it was their own cause that they defended. Constantine disbanded this seditious guard, dismantled its barracks, which were a fortress, and sent the survivors into the legions of the Rhine. The friends and councillors of Maxentius and the son who remained to him were put to death.² But Constantine apprehended his duties as a ruler too clearly to allow the civil war to continue after these executions, or to suffer private individuals to have their victims, as he had had his. A law put a stop to the lodging of information,³—always so promptly furnished when upon great political changes it is desired to transfer to new men the fortunes and honors possessed by the defeated party.

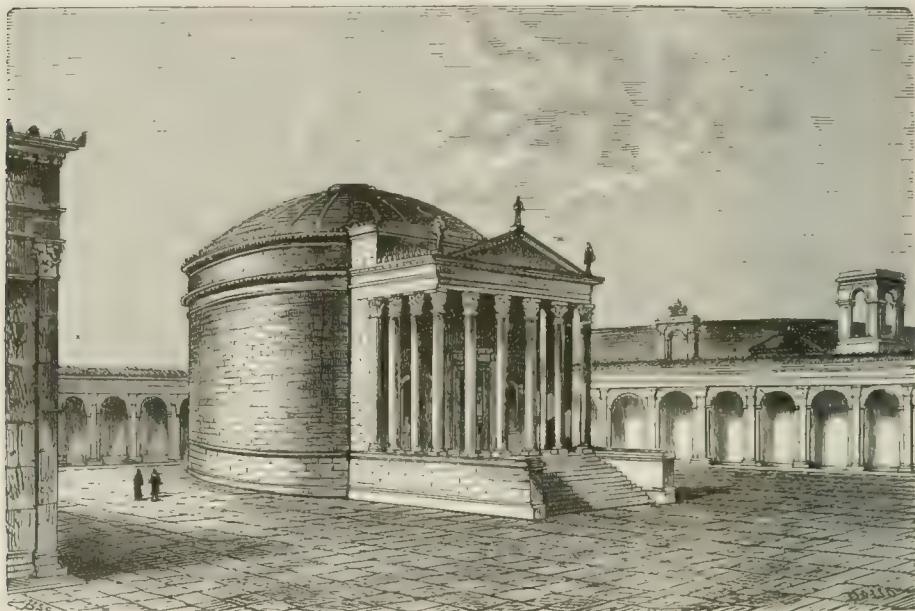
For the people Constantine instituted the games and largesses which always ended Roman tragedies; in the Senate he spoke modestly of his services, promised the Conspectus Fathers to hear their counsels with deference and to restore to them their old prerogatives. These prerogatives were, as a matter of fact, forever gone; but the Senate, flattered that the Emperor should recognize its existence, made use of an ancient right, recovered for the moment, to assign Constantine the first rank among the Augusti, to vote him a triumphal arch,—for whose decoration an arch of

¹ . . . *sequebatur hunc comitatum suum tyranni ipsius uteruum capit* (*Pan. ret. x. 31*).

² Zosimus, ii. 17, and *Pan. ret. x. 6*; . . . *Se'clos persequitur. Constituta enim et in perpetuum Roma fundata est, omnibus qui statim eius iacturam perirent, cum stirpe decesserat, Romulus, the eldest son of Maxentius, whom he had made Caesar and twice consul, perished before his father* (Eckhel, viii. 59, and the inscription *Dico Romane nobis esset rica, his consuli*).

³ A law of 313 against informers makes mention of an earlier law which is lost. That of 313 was confirmed by two others, dated 319 and 335 (*U. d. I. C. L. x. 1, 2, and 3*). The development of the judicial system, especially the appointment of agents of the treasury having it for their official duty to protect the rights of the state, rendered the informer now a useless personage, although he had once been indispensable, at a time when neither Greek nor Roman states had what we call "departments." We shall see, however, that in 325 Constantine himself instigated informers.

Trajan was despoiled,—and to inscribe his name upon a temple and a basilica built by Maxentius.¹ He summoned to the curia a great number of provincials,² and he created or regulated the *follis senatorius*,—a tax at once real and personal, since the senators paid both for their dignity and for their landed property. This double measure doubtless displeased them; but at heart Constantine was no more disposed than Diocletian had been to seek the favor of these former masters of the Empire.



TOMB OF THE ELDEST SON OF MAXENTIUS.³

In the administration there was no change made: most of the officials of Maxentius were retained in their positions, his praetorian prefect even received the most important government in the Western Empire, that of Africa, with the duty of there effacing the traces of the civil war. Cirta, rebuilt, received the conqueror's name, which it keeps to this day,—Constantine. Every Emperor owed Rome some architectural work: Constantine

¹ This arch of Trajan has disappeared. The bas-reliefs taken from it are on the upper part of Constantine's arch. See, later, the arch of Constantine, and also the bas-reliefs and statues that decorate it. The basilica begun by Maxentius was an edifice of colossal proportions, long believed to be a temple of Peace built by Vespasian.

² *Pan. vet.* x. 35.

³ On the Appian Way. (Restoration after Canina.)

repaired at his own expense the Aqua Virgo,¹ and doubtless began on the Quirinal the Thermae that bear his name.

He remained but two months in Rome, and thence went to Milan; he there met Licinius, and he would have been glad to persuade Diocletian to come thither also. At Milan he issued the famous edict of which we shall speak later. To keep the narrative more distinct, we shall first follow the sequence of political events until the unity of the Empire is re-established; after which we shall be more at liberty to examine in its successive phases the great revolution which was about to take place under the direction of the man who had become the sole master of the world.

From year to year the number of the Emperors had been reduced. Maximian, Galerius, Maxentius, and Diocletian have disappeared. Three still remain,—Constantine, Licinius, and Maximin Daza. Maximin, a sincere pagan like his uncle Galerius, and always surrounded by priests, magicians, and charlatans who called themselves prophets, had continued intermittently the persecution. He fought against the Church in two ways,²—by sentences of condemnation, and by the endeavor to give to paganism, by means of an organization modelled after that of the Christian Church, the discipline which it had always lacked. In each city he strengthened the authority of the priest appointed to superintend the public worship of the gods, and also that of the supreme pontiff, who had under his jurisdiction all the provincial clergy.³ For the purpose of securing great respect for his pontiffs, he chose them from

¹ *Aur., Vict. Caes.* 41.—The mosaic represented on the preceding page was found in 1876 in the village of Oued Atmenia, on the road from Constantine to Setif, and was published by the archaeological society of the former city. In Vol. VI. p. 150 is given a fragment representing a Numidian horse. (See *Mém. de la Soc. arch. de Constantine*, vol. xix.)

² He favored riots against over-zealous Christians in the cities, and condemned them to the mines. See the reply of Maximin to the request of the inhabitants of Tyre, begging him to free their city from the Christians (*Euseb., Hist. eccl.* ix. 7). Eusebius speaks of death-penalties inflicted: Lactantius (*De Morte pers.* 36) mentions only mutilations: . . . *Ocidi servos Dei vult, debilitari jussit. Itaque confessoribus effilicabantur oculi, amputabantur manus, pedes detruncabantur, nares vel auriculae desecabantur.* But these mutilations may frequently have caused the death of the persons suffering them. Maximin's morals are depicted in the same colors as those of Galerius and Maxentius, and as, later, those of Licinius, notwithstanding his advanced age, after he became Constantine's adversary. Lactantius (*ibid.* 38) goes so far as to impute to Licinius the prohibition of all marriage without his permission in each case, *ut ipse in omnibus nuptiis praegustator esset.*

³ *Euseb., Hist. eccl.* viii. 14, and ix. 4; *Lactant., ibid.* 36.

among persons of the highest consideration, and gave them an authority almost equal to that of the provincial governors. His disputes with Licinius, whom he had compelled to relinquish the whole of Asia Minor, and the relations that he had formed with Maxentius, rendered him the enemy of the two Augusti of the West. In 313, while Licinius was still with Constantine at Milan, he believed the occasion favorable for taking his adversary



THE TRIUMPH OF LICINIUS.¹

unawares by an invasion. A numerous army, secretly collected beyond the Taurus, rapidly traversed the Asiatic peninsula and crossed the Straits; in a few days this force captured the stronghold of Byzantium, and after this, Heracleia, and penetrated as far as the neighborhood of Hadrianople. Here Licinius awaited him. The latter's troops were inferior in number; but the skilful old general had collected them from those garrisons on the

¹ Cameo in the *Cabinet de France*, No. 255. Licinius, standing in the triumphal quadriga, holds in one hand a javelin, and in the other the globe, symbol of sovereignty. The horses of the quadriga tread under foot vanquished adversaries. Two winged Victories hold the reins of the horses, the one on the right carrying a trophy, that on the left a standard on which are the "images" of the two Emperors. The two figures, each presenting a globe to the Emperor, represent the sun and moon (sardonyx of three layers, 55 mill. by 70). The rarity of iconographic cameos of the fourth century gives special importance to this one, on which a paper has been published by M. Chabouillet, *Rer. archéol.* ix. year.

Danube where the neighborhood of the Barbarians had kept courage and discipline alive. He easily defeated the Syrian legions, without need of the miracles which Lactantius narrates (Maj. I., 313). Maximin fled as far as Tarsus, in Cilicia, where he died.¹ His wife was thrown into the Orontes; his children—a boy of eight and a girl of seven—and his principal officers were murdered. The conqueror, who has been represented as protected by angels at the battle of Hadrianople, was no more clement than was the brother-in-law of Maxentius at Rome after the apparition of the miraculous cross. A few months later Licinius put to death a son of Galerius, the wife and daughter of Diocletian, and the young Severianus, who paid by a premature death for his father's sad honor of wearing for less than two years the imperial purple. At this time Constantine, after some successes over the Franks, continued to send his captives into the amphitheatre for the amusement of the people of Trèves. Notwithstanding celestial visions and marvellous dreams, these men were destitute of heart, and their faith, if any they had, was without influence upon their conduct.² Their cruelty was universally commended; in referring to all these murders, the Christian preceptor of a son of Constantine utters a cry of triumph.³ The inspiration of the gentle Galilean teacher was replaced by that of the implacable Jehovah of the Mosaic law.

III.—DEATH OF LICINIUS; CONSTANTINE SOLE EMPEROR.

THE Empire had now only two masters; but this was one too many. War, in fact, soon broke out between these two ambitious men. Under pretext of a conspiracy formed against him by his brother-in-law Bassianus, Constantine caused the latter to be put

¹ The account of his death, as given by Lactantius, resembles that of the death of Galerius. Both deserved to come to a bad end, by reason of their cruelty towards the Christians; but it is impossible to accept as historic facts the legends which, by repetition, have lost even the dramatic interest which the narrators sought to give them. Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.*, ix. 8) mentions an Armenian war of Maximin, of which we know nothing.

² Malalas (xii. 314) speaks of the massacre of two thousand inhabitants of Antioch in the circus of that city by order of Licinius, in revenge for sarcasms current there in respect to himself (?).

³ *Bestias malas delerit Dominus et erasit de terra. Ceacabimus igitur triumphum Dei in exultatione* (Lactant., *De Morte pers.* 52-53).

to death, and then required of Licinius the exile of Senecio, a brother of the supposed criminal, who was also a relative of the Augustus of the East;¹ in reality he desired part of the spoils of Maximin Daza. Licinius refused. This Emperor was a brave soldier and a skilful general,—a friend of the lower classes, says an old writer (but we are not told in what way he befriended them); on the other hand, an enemy to the courtiers and eunuchs, whom he called rats gnawing at the palace; a good administrator of the public finances,—a virtue which would lead us to pardon his contempt for the lawyers, whom he treated as a public pest,² had he not been cruel, like all who in those days had the power of life and death.

Without declaring war, Constantine crossed the Alps at the head of twenty thousand men. On the 8th of October, 314, the two armies met near Cibalis, in Pannonia, between the Save and the Drave. The battle was long and desperate. Licinius fell back, half conquered, but saved enough men to enable him to fight a second time in Thrace, in the plains of Mardia. Constantine's victory was even less decisive; he was far from his provinces, in a hostile country, and opposed to an adversary whom two heavy blows had not crushed, and who fortified himself as he retreated. Constantine decided to negotiate. Licinius had appointed as Caesar, Valens; one of his generals; this was a new claimant to be dealt with, and Constantine refused to recognize him. To render negotiations possible, Licinius ordered the death of the new Caesar, and then accepted terms which left him in Europe only Thrace and the shores of the Euxine,—that is to say, the gates of Asia, which was now his sole domain; but in the East he preserved all the inheritance left by Maximin.³

The two brothers-in-law, being thus reconciled, agreed that their respective sons should be made Caesars. Constantine gave this title to Crispus, who, now approaching maturity, was already a

¹ According to the anonymous fragment which Valesius attaches to his edition of Ammianus Marcellinus, a plot was formed against Constantine by Bassianus, whom he had appointed Caesar, and by Licinius. This story is extremely vague, and it does not seem probable that Constantine, having a son Crispus now fourteen or fifteen years of age, would have prepared a rival for him by giving Bassianus the title of Caesar.

² *Epit.* 41; *Aur. Viet.*, *Caes.* 41.

³ Zosimus, ii. 19; Peter Patricius, *Fragm. hist. graecorum*, iv. 189.



CONSTANTINE AUGUSTUS. STATUE FOUND IN THE BATHS OF
CONSTANTINE AT ROME.

useful auxiliary;¹ while Licinianus, a child not two years old, would in all probability witness the death of his aged father before himself emerging from childhood (March, 317). The conditions were not equal in the case of the two Augusti, and it was to preserve this disparity that Constantine had forbidden Licinius to retain in Valens a second in command capable of being to him a protector.

The numerous family borne by Fausta to Constantine had also increased the ambition of her husband. Within eight years she had given birth to three sons,—the younger Constantine, Constans, and Constans.² For these new-comers it was necessary to provide; and their father had the design of eventually giving them the provinces of his colleague. He must have intended this from a very early period; for after the year 319 the names of Licinius and his son are omitted from the consular Fasti. Two years before the final rupture the official orators at the Western court no longer dared to speak of the second Augustus; and the fact that Constantine received a Persian embassy gives us reason to believe that in anticipation of the struggle he had sought allies among the natural enemies of the Eastern Emperor.³ He strove to gain others by a declamatory edict, very favorable to the public debtors, which he addressed to all the cities subject to him (*ad populum*), and by an amnesty which opened all prisons, except in case of poisoners, adulterers, and homicides, in whose behalf no one was interested. These edicts, speedily made known beyond his frontiers, must have gained him partisans in the provinces belonging to Licinius. But the humanity that he manifested was a legitimate war-measure against his adversary.⁴

¹ Tillemont (iv. 17) represents him as born about 300; Ducange (*Fam. loyz*, p. 46) in 296.

² The younger Constantine was made Caesar when only four years old, that the son of Fausta might be equal in dignity to the son of Minervina (Zosim., ii. 20).

³ In his description of the solemnity of March 7, 321, Nazarius, who gives the most brilliant picture of the Empire, makes no allusion to the Augustus of the Eastern provinces. It is also he who mentions the Persian embassy.

⁴ *Codex Theod.* xi. 7, 3, anno 320. This edict forbids the use of torture and of too harsh imprisonment in the case of the public debtors. *Securitatem*, he said: and any who are so foolish that they do not escape, let them be kept under arrest in an open and convenient place, their property alone shall answer for them. It has been shown (p. 428, note 3) to what distress the severity of the Government had been able to reduce the public debtors, and later, these persons were put to death by Valentinian I. (Amm. Marcellin. xxvii. 7). The pretext for the second edict, which is dated Oct. 30, 322, just as hostilities were breaking out, was the birth (?) of a son to Crispus (*ibid.* ix. 38, 1).

As Maxentius has been represented as entirely in the wrong, in order to save Constantine from the reproach of ambition, so Licinius has been accused of bringing about a war which it was on all accounts for his interest to avoid. Already twice defeated, and having left only a third of the provinces and the poorest troops of the Empire, he would have been guilty of extreme folly in provoking his formidable colleague. Constantine, on the contrary, who owed Italy and Africa to one successful war, and Greece and Illyricum to another, had an ardent desire to re-establish, to his own advantage and to that of his race, the unity of the Empire.¹ He had the skill—which has been more than once exhibited since his time—of throwing upon his adversary the blame of the rupture and of making himself appear to be the defender of the oppressed.

There were many churches established throughout the East. Did Constantine despatch secret emissaries to them? He had no need of doing so in order to make the eyes and hopes of the Christians turn towards him. His consideration for them, and the letters he addressed to the bishops, said plainly enough where they were to find their protector. It is possible that he encouraged an active preaching of the gospel in the states of the Oriental Augustus, although the scanty documents of the period do not permit us to assert this. We do not go beyond legitimate probabilities, however, in asserting that the bishops of Asia desired the triumph of the real author of the edict of Milan. This, Eusebius does not attempt to conceal: “Licinius believed that in our churches we prayed only for Constantine; and truly we were the friends of the great Emperor, beloved of God.”² These words explain why Licinius banished certain Christians from his presence, why he prohibited the episcopal synods, where he feared that political affairs should be mingled with religion, and the too numerous assemblies of the devout in the cities. He did not prohibit these assemblies, he said; outside the gates he authorized them,—in the open country,

¹ Eutropius (x. 13) and Zosimus (ii. 18) impute the rupture to Constantine. To Eusebius, of course (*Life of Const.* i. 50), Licinius appears the sole offender.

² *Life of Constantine*, i. 56, and *Hist. eccl.* x. 8. He forgets that, a few chapters earlier, he had extolled the services rendered to religion by Licinius, “the most religious Emperor, the preacher of peace and piety,” and that the Christians asserted that at the first battle of Hadrianople this Emperor had received the aid of Heaven.

"where the air is purer for a crowd than within narrow walls."¹ He thought, in reality, that a mob was less likely to gather in the fields, and could be more surely repressed there. These precautions make it evident that he was seriously alarmed.

Licinius, one of the signers of the edict of Milan, was never a zealous pagan. After his victory over Maximin he had put to death in Antioch the priest of Jupiter and the more violent persecutors of the new religion. Certain of the Christians (who were, it is true, considered heretics) remained about him (as Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedeia), and the measures that he either took or recommended,²—the separation of the men and women in the churches, and the religious instruction of the latter, no longer by the clergy, but by deaconesses set apart for that duty,—do not represent him as a great enemy of religion. At most, we may infer that he still believed in the old accusations current among the heathen in respect to the assemblies of the neophytes.³ The inclinations, real or supposed, of his clergy drove him to acts of severity which justly exasperated the orthodox believers and provoked resistance, to which authority responded with the terrible laws wherewith it was armed. Churches were again closed or destroyed; confiscations and sentences of exile pronounced; persons of free birth reduced to slavery, others sent to the mines, and possibly a few bishops put to death.⁴ However, only individuals were at this time struck, and there was no general declaration against Christian believers: accordingly, the ecclesiastical authors do not indicate a persecution in the reign of Licinius.⁵

In the history of this period we walk amid darkness, so much has religious passion veiled or distorted the facts: the works which it has left us are like those palimpsests whose visible writing hides a text more important, but very difficult to read. A few lines by

¹ Euseb., *Life of Constantine*, i. 53. Maximin had also forbidden assemblages in the cemeteries.

² *Ibid.*

³ Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* ix. 5) shows that these accusations still continued.

⁴ Eusebius (*ibid.* x. 8) names not one, he mentions no special fact; and while implying that there was at that time a violent persecution, he ends by saying that the tyrant would have decreed a violent persecution if he had not been overthrown.

⁵ Sulpicius Severus in his *Historia sacerdotalis*: *Sed et inter persecutiones non computatur.* The eleventh canon of the Council of Nicaea speaks of Christians who, under Licinius had apostasized "without constraint, without loss of their goods, and without peril."

Theodoret,¹ for example, authorize a conjecture which may be the truth. "Constantine," he says, "later accused Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, of having been the soul of the war between the two Augusti."² Arianism, which, simplifying the Christian dogma,

VICTORIA GOTHICA.³

threw a bridge across between the old religion and the new, was already making great progress in the East. This Eusebius, a zealous partisan of Arius, may have instigated the Emperor, in whose confidence he was, to be severe towards the too-zealous adversaries of the doctrine which he himself defended; so that we can see in the severity of Licinius the results of a struggle between two

Christian sects. Thus would be explained the local disturbances that the other Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea, relates. Committed in violation of the edict of Milan, they gave Constantine a legitimate pretext to appear as the defender of the great law which had proclaimed religious liberty to all.

Since the late war with Licinius, Constantine had been able to keep his troops in fighting order and to secure to them victory and plunder.—a double guarantee of their fidelity. In Gaul Crispus had become habituated to the soldier's trade by easy campaigns against the Alemanni and the Franks, who seemed to relieve one another in the duty of keeping the Rhenish legions in a state of incessant activity (320). On the shores of the Danube, Constantine repulsed an incursion of the Sarmatians, whom he pursued along the left bank of the river;⁵ and the Goths who ventured into Moesia and Thrace met the same fate. From these two expeditions Constantine had brought back captives, who, according to custom, were dispersed among the cities as slaves and colonists, or

SMALL BRONZE.⁴

¹ *Hist. eccl.* i. 19.

² *Hic et expiatories opulos ei me mittebat et tantum non armatis militiae operam navabat tyranno* (*ibid.*), and Constantine's letter to the Nicomedians against Eusebius.

³ Bronze medal struck in memory of the success of Constantine against the Goths. A helmeted Rome receives the wreath which a Victory offers her.

⁴ Coin of Constantine struck in memory of victories over the Sarmatians. SARMATIA DEVICTA. Victory holding a trophy.

⁵ Eckhel, viii. 75.

enrolled among the imperial troops.¹ These easy campaigns were excellent preludes to more serious combats. At the same time the Emperor constructed a fleet of two hundred galleys, he improved the port of Thessalonica, and numerous troops were collected in the neighborhood of that city.

To these preparations corresponded those made by Licinius; if we may accept the statements of Zosimus, nearly three hundred thousand men encountered one another in the plain of Hadrianople. The two armies were separated by the River Hebrus. A skilful manœuvre of Constantine, which escaped the vigilance of his adversary, secured to him again a complete victory. He had bravely shared in the actual dangers of the field: after having made excellent arrangements for the battle, he had fought among his troops and had been wounded (July 3, 323). Licinius, with the remains of his army, shut himself up in Byzantium, to bar against his rival the passage from Europe into Asia. His three hundred and fifty galleys, supreme in the Hellespont, secured his supplies and hindered those of the enemy, which for the most part must arrive by sea.²

The Euxine, pouring its waters into the Mediterranean through a narrow channel, forms in the Hellespont a rapid current, which in certain weathers it is difficult to stem, becoming more navigable when the south wind drives back into the Dardanelles the waters of the Aegean Sea. The admiral of Licinius had this current in his favor: but he did not know how to profit by it. In a first

¹ Zosimus, ii. 21. The two adversaries had each in his army Gothic auxiliaries. This was already a long-established custom.

² Constantine so fully depended upon his convoys for provisions that he had assembled as many as two hundred freighters.



MAP FOR THE WAR BETWEEN LICINIUS AND CONSTANTINE.

engagement between the two fleets the losses were equal; but the following day a south wind blew, and Crispus, in command of Constantine's fleet, advanced his galleys to the attack, and the enemy lost a hundred and thirty vessels. Constantine, now secure in respect to his convoys, went on to press the siege of Byzantium, and the victorious fleet of Crispus drew near the Golden Horn. Before the blockade was completed, Licinius escaped into Asia. He named Martinianus, his *magister officiorum*,¹ either Caesar or Augustus,² rapidly reorganized his army, and extended it along the coast from Chalcedon to Lampsacus to guard the landings. But Constantine, master of the sea, could find a landing somewhere. His fleet carried the troops to the foot of the heights of Chrysopolis (Scutari), where they at once threw up intrenchments; in this way the line of defence projected by Licinius was turned. The latter broke camp, and attempted by a resolute attack to drive his enemy into the sea; but he was repulsed, and fled to Nicomedeia.

Having neither soldiers nor resources, the valiant old man could do nothing else than lay down the purple at the feet of

the harsh and inexorable conqueror (Sept. 23, 323).

Constantine had promised his sister, the wife of Licinius, that he would spare the life of the dethroned Emperor, and accordingly banished him to Thessalonica. But a man who had been twelve years Emperor, caused anxiety, even though a captive; and the Oriental method of finding a relief from this anxiety in destroying him who caused it, was not displeasing to the all-powerful master of the Roman world. Notwithstanding the pledge to Constantia, an order of death was sent to Licinius (324).⁵ Martinianus had been murdered the day after the defeat. According to the custom of the time, the servants and

¹ This functionary had the superintendence of all audiences with the Emperor, and exercised extensive jurisdiction over both civil and military officers.

² Some very rare coins give him the title of Augustus (*Comptes rendus de l'Acad. des inscr. et bulles lettres*, November, 1879).

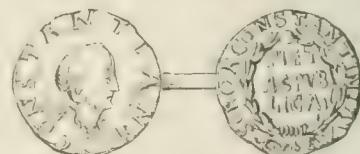
³ D. N. M. MARTINIANO[s] P. F. AVG. (Small bronze.)

⁴ CONSTANTIA and the bust of the wife of Licinius. On the reverse: SOROR CONSTANTINI AVG. In a wreath, PIETAS PVBLICA; below, CONS. (Small bronze.)

⁵ *Contra religionem sacramenti occisus est* (Eutropius, x. 6).



MARTINIANUS.³



COIN OF CONSTANTIA.⁴

friends of Licinius shared the fate of the conquered Emperor. Even his acts were annulled; and the reaction lasted nearly two years. When Constantine put a stop to it by the rescript of July 8, 326,¹ there was nothing left in the East which could recall the rule of him whom the conqueror entitled "a tyrant." What perturbations in social life must have been caused by these measures of political revenge! Unhappily, more or less seriously, they continue in all times.

This war has been represented as the decisive struggle between two religions. Eusebius represents Licinius as saying to his soldiers before the battle: "Look upon our gods and those of our fathers; our enemy has forsaken them to follow one whom we know not. We shall see this day whether he or we be in the wrong, and victory shall decide whom we are to worship. Our gods, who are many, against his who is alone, will assuredly give us the victory." History does not find in these events the character which the bishop gives us. This war was, like preceding wars, one of ambition; but it had the results of a religious war, because the vanquished party had been supported by the pagans and heretics. When Constantine saw the orthodox bishops of the East welcome him as their savior, and the crowd of those whose beliefs are determined by the success of a cause pass over to the new faith, he found himself more than ever confirmed in the belief that the future belonged to the Christian Church, and that political wisdom counselled him to throw in his lot with her. This he did; but with sagacious precautions which we shall now examine.

¹ *Codex Theod.* xv. 14, 3: "That which the tyrant decided conformably to the laws, shall remain in force."

² SOLI INVICTO AETERNO AVG. Constantine with radiate head, standing in a quadriga, crowned by a Victory who holds a palm. Beneath, S. M. T. (Reverse of a gold coin.)



CONSTANTINE, WITH RADIATE HEAD,
CROWNED BY A VICTORY.

CHAPTER CII.

THE RELIGIOUS POLICY OF CONSTANTINE.

I.—THE MIRACULOUS VISION; THE LABARUM; THE WORSHIP OF THE SUN.

IT was upon the way to Rome, during the march to meet Maxentius, in 312, that, according to Eusebius, the conversion of Constantine took place. In his *Ecclesiastical History*, published fourteen years after the battle of the Milvian Bridge, Eusebius makes no mention of the apparition which later he describes in his *Life of Constantine*. But this latter is a pious, and not an historical work. The author declares that he proposes to make known to posterity neither the wars and victories of the Emperor, nor his laws and labors for the good of his subjects:¹ he will relate only

¹ I. 11. He speaks in the same way in his *Ecclesiastical History* (viii. 2) and in his book upon the Martyrs of Palestine (12); accordingly Socrates, who continues the work of Eusebius, declares that he has obtained no material for the history of the Church from the *Life of Constantine*. Eusebius even dared to maintain, in his *Praeparatio Evangelica* (xii. 31), the monstrous doctrine of useful falsehoods; and he employs them largely. Constantine, as a special favor, diminishes by one fourth the land-tax of Autun (*Pan. ret.* viii. 11): the historian represents him as extending this favor to the entire Empire,—which would have been the ruin of the imperial finances (*Life of Const.* iv. 2). The Emperor closes or destroys some heathen temples: Eusebius asserts that they were all destroyed. Constantine refuses to heretics the immunities which he had granted to the orthodox believers (*Codex Theod.* xvi. 5, 1): his historian declares that all heresies are destroyed (*Life of Const.* iii. 66), while he himself was the leader of the most lasting of them all. To hear Eusebius, we should believe that Constantine subjugated the whole world, from the North to the South (*ibid.* i. 8); whereas he added not one foot of ground to the territory of the Empire. And so on indefinitely. The historian's courage is of the same rank with his impartiality and his intelligence. In the *Ecclesiastical History*, composed before the death of Crispus, he speaks with enthusiasm of this unfortunate prince. In the *Life of Constantine*, prepared during the reign of the son of Fausta, he does not mention the name of the elder brother. The monk Zonaras is equally reluctant to write a word of blame; on this topic the pen drops from his hand, and he cries: "No, I can say nothing which may impair the fame of this divine man" (*Ann.* xiii. 4). Gelasius of Cyzicus fabricates a speech of Constantine before the Council of Nicaea. I have great doubt in respect to this Emperor's strange letter to Arius, and also the discussions which Sozomenus reports between the bishops and philosophers at the Council of Nicaea, and the

his pious acts; and as the hagiographers have their minds strained towards the supernatural, instead of narrating to us the skilful military measures of his hero, he represents him as specially concerned in defeating the diabolical machinations of Maxentius. The process of reasoning which he assigns to the Emperor, and believes to be most Christian, is in reality very shrewd. "Constantine," he says, "was well aware that to defeat these magical incantations, some other aid than the sword of his soldiers was needful, and he was seeking among all the gods that one who should give him the strongest support. Then the thought came into his mind that his predecessors had put their trust in a multitude of gods, and had most of them perished miserably. His father only, who had never shared this error, had had a glorious life and a prosperous end.¹ The Emperor now felt that these useless gods were an imposture, and began to call upon the God of Constantius, praying him to extend help and reveal himself to the suppliant: whereupon a sign appeared in the sky. If any one else had related this miracle," the historian adds, "it would not be credible. But long after, the Emperor himself told it to me, and confirmed by an oath the truth of what he said. Marching at the head of his troops, he saw above the setting sun a luminous cross, with these words: 'Ἐν τούτῳ νίκα, 'By this conquer.' The following night the Christ of God

justitiam which he asserts that Constantine established on Friday, in honor of the cross. Laws even are fabricated, like the too-famous constitution *Dicitur confratello velicio episcopatum* (*Const. Sismondi*, No. 1). Roman Catholic writers acknowledge this. "In the collections relative to the Council of Nicaea," says the Due de Broglie (*L'Église et l'Empire romain au quatrième siècle*, vol. i. 2d part, p. 65), "there are a great many canons and decrees manifestly fictitious; it is a deluge of forgeries." The confusion was increased by rivalries of sects, each inventing documents to support its claims. Thus Theophanes, in his *Chronicon*, accused the Arians of having fabricated the constitutions said to have been addressed by Constantine to Pope Melechiades (Tillemont, *Hist. des Emp.* iv. 14). It appears from the pretended donation of Constantine, from the legend of his baptism at Rome, from so many acts of martyrs which cannot be admitted, and from the fictitious Decretals, that this usage continued for a long time. The learned Abbe de Meissas says in one of his papers on the evangelization of the Gauls: "The ninth century was pre-eminently the age of falsehood." We may say the same of many others, — the Council of Tyre in 335 is famous by its "living dead man" (*τὸν ζῶντα νεκρόν*, Gregory Nazianzen, *Encomium of Athanasius*, 15). Athanasius asserts that letters were fabricated there, purporting to be written by him; and he says to Constantine in his *Apologia*: "These skilful forgers have more than once imitated the writing of your own royal hands."

¹ Eusebius, "the double-tongued" (*πιλόταρος ἡγεμόνης στρατοῦ*, Socrates, i. 25) was so well pleased with the reflections assigned by him to Constantine at this crisis that he attributes the converse process of reasoning to Licinius, in the address which he represents him as delivering before the battle of Hadrianople (*Life of Const.* ii. 5, 6).

appeared to him with the same cross, and ordered him to make a standard in the likeness of it.”¹

There is a sad lack of dignity in this oath by which the Emperor attests to a subject the imperial veracity; and the story, made public after Constantine’s death by a courtier-bishop desirous to prove that he had been admitted to intimate familiarity with the Emperor, is in itself extremely improbable. If, however, we remember the promise given by Constantine to his sister to spare the life of Licinius, whom, shortly after, he put to death, we shall perhaps be disposed to accuse the bishop of nothing more than a simple-minded credulity. But Eusebius makes too free use of visions, venturing even to say that God often appeared to Constantine; that he revealed the future to him, and after the battle of the Milvian Bridge designated to the Emperor which of the friends and kindred of Maxentius should be put to death.² To suspect Eusebius of a pious fraud is not a thing which would have greatly angered him, and in the days in which he lived no one would have blamed him for it. Constantine does likewise; it is by the order of God (*Deo jubente*), he says, that he founded Constantinople.³ Heads of states and heads of religions have long governed the world by announcing their own ideas as divine inspirations, and presenting them to the nations as an order from heaven. Historic criticism, which believes in the permanency of natural law, and says, with Seneca, that God obeys the order that he has established (*semel jussit, semper parcat*), no longer discusses the question of miracles. But it is easy to understand how a legend may have quickly formed on the subject of such an event as the transformation of the pagan into the Christian Empire. The contrary would have been surprising; for it is also a law of history that at certain epochs the human mind proceeds in this

¹ Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, i. 28, 30. According to Eusebius and Socrates (i. 2) the soldiers also saw the miraculous cross. In that case the famous vision would have had witnesses enough to render unnecessary the Emperor’s story and his testimony by oath to the reality of the miracle. The historians of the period are often singularly deficient in imagination. Saint Cyrillus (ap. Baronius, anno 353, note 26), Philostorgius (iii. 26), Socrates (ii. 28), Sozomenus (iv. 5), and, following them, Nicephorus (ix. 32), repeat this legend of Eusebius in the case of Constantius II.; at the moment when he was about to engage with Magnentius, a cross appears in the sky.

² *Life of Const.* i. 47; ii. 12, 14, etc.

³ *Codex Theod.* xiii. 5, 7.

way, because the belief in the marvellous, which is in the depths of the soul of man, comes out in those times with an irresistibly expansive power. Even in the eyes of the pagans the victory over Maxentius was a divine act, since they believed that the god Constantius guided the army of his son (*divinas expeditiones*);¹ it was even more natural that the Christians should recognize in this divine leader the Christ whom they adored. Emerging from their prisons, and amazed to find themselves received with tolerance and consideration, the Christians saw in the conduct of Constantine the effect of divine intervention. From the very beginning, the legend assumed various forms. Instead of the vision clear in the sunlight, Lactantius speaks of a dream in which the Emperor received the command to place the cross upon the soldiers' shields.²

In the case of an ambitious man who was never a visionary, apparitions and dreams are subjects of history. The motives are too evident which have caused such things to be believed by those interested. It is different in respect to the *labarum*; for this standard, borne in battle at the Emperor's side, may be regarded as the symbol of the Constantinian policy.

The Christians saw the cross everywhere,—in the trophies and standards of the legions, even upon the human face, where the line of the eyes and of the nose designed for them that instrument of the death-penalty employed especially for slaves; and it is to their honor that they have made from an object of infamy the symbol of salvation.³ But this sign, and even a character

¹ *Ducebat Constantius pater . . . qui divinas expeditiones jam diens agitabat* (*Pan. ret.* x. 14.)

² *De Morte pers.* 44.

³ Saint Justin, *Apol.* i. 55; Tertull., *Apol.* 16: *Victorias adoratis, cum in tropacis cruces intestina sint tropacorum*: and, still better, Minucius Felix, in chap. xxix. of the *Ostavicus*, who concludes a long enumeration of pagan objects resembling a cross, with these words: *Ita signo crucis aut ratio innititur aut vestra religio formatur*. At the same time the representation of a cross is very rare in the catacombs, and appears by stealth, concealed under some other symbol, such as an anchor, a lateen-yard, a man praying with arms outstretched, "the bird flying straight up to heaven and extending the cross of its wings, with a sound which seems a prayer" (Tertull., *De orat.* 39). It is very seldom that the cross appears without disguise on any monument before the time of Constantine; the Chevalier Rossi has seen it but once (*Roma sotter.* vol. ii. pl. 18), and Minucius Felix says (*Ivi.* xxix.): *Cruces non existunt*. But the cross, or symbols resembling this figure, even what we have called the monogram, were of very common use in pagan antiquity. "Must we not believe," says the Abbé Martigny, "that the early Christians formed the idea of appropriating also, and even of

resembling that which later was the monogram of the Christ, was in use long before our era on parchments, on coins which had

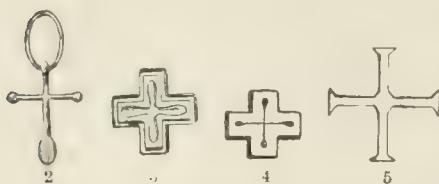
preferring the , a very common sign in ancient times, which, being also employed by the pagans, had the advantage, while offering to the believer the first letters of the name of Christ,

of satisfying that need of secrecy which was one of the most salient characteristics of the primitive Church" (*Dictionnaire des antiquités chrétiennes*, p. 478). The whole design of Munter's book, *Sinnbilder und Kunstdarstellung der alten Christen*, is the development of this idea.

The *crux ansata* (Fig. 2) of the Pharaohs and of the Egyptian gods is seen upon Christian monuments in the Thebaid and in Nubia (paper by Letronne in the *Mém. de l'Acad. des inscr.* vol. xvi. new series), and on Persian and Cypriote monuments (the Duc de Luynes, *Numismatique des satrapies et de la Phénicie sous les rois achéménides*, pl. i. Nos. 3 and 4; pl. viii. Nos. 2, 13, and 17; *Num. et inscr. cypriotes*, pl. i. Nos. 5, 6, 7, etc., *passim*).

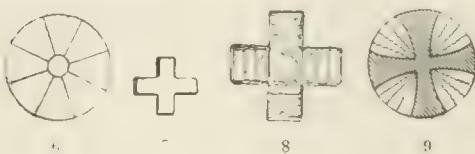
The Greeks had this monogram in their running hand: it served also as a mark on the tetradrachms of Athens and on certain coins of the Ptolemies (Eckhel, viii. 89); it is found

also on a coin of Decius, the great persecutor of the Christians: ΕΠΙ ΣΤΡΑΦΙΑΝΟΥ ΒΑΣΙΠΑΤΟΥ, where the X and the P are united (Munter, p. 33). In this case it is only an abbreviation, but elsewhere it has a religious signification. A Christian inscription published by Egger (*Mém. d'hist. anc. et de philol.* p. 427), begins with a chrisma and ends with a tau (T),



which, according to Tertullian, represents the cross, and was to the Gentiles a symbol of salvation. Similar signs, and others giving the image of the Christian cross more perfectly, have been found in ancient Assyria, where they had a double signification, both astronomical

and religious. Thus we frequently see on Babylonian cylinders figures resembling the equilateral cross (3 and 4), sometimes accompanied by the Sun and Moon. Marking, as they do, the four cardinal points, these figures naturally served to express the idea of the horizon, of the infinite in space and time,



and, passing from the natural to the ideal meaning, the idea of God. Another, the cuneiform cross (5), is the figure of the god Anou, personification of the sky (Rawlinson, *Inscr. of Western Asia*, vol. ii. pl. 48), which is itself represented by the cross with eight rays inscribed in a circle (6). These are the eight regions of the Sun and the Sky,—a figure much used on astrological tablets, and of which there are many specimens in the Museum of the Louvre. This symbol appears on two monoliths representing the king Assurnazirpal (about 884 b. c.) and his grandson Samsivul. The same sign, which is found on an image of Senacherib in the British Museum (Fr. Lenormant, *Hist. anc. de l'Orient*, p. 364) was also placed on the standards of the Assyrian army. (Note by Ménant.) On a Theban tomb, Aramaean soldiers have, suspended to a necklace, either the equilateral cross (7), or a cross (8) resembling those worn in the same way by the priests and monks of the Roman Catholic Church. In Gudean texts recently brought home by M. de Sarzac, this cross, with three rays in each branch (9), signifies that which has eternal duration. (Note by Oppert.)

* Coin of Trajan Decius, struck at Maeonia in Lydia, and having the monogram  (Bronze.)

extensive circulation,¹ on military standards² and religious monuments. The *gamma*³-cross, which means benediction and good augury, was placed by the Hindoos in their most ancient temples and on the images of Buddha, by the Gauls on their tombs, and we find it in the Roman catacombs on the vestments of priests represented there.

Under the form of the ansate cross, which exactly reproduces the *chrisma*, it signifies salvation, eternal life, and was in the hands of the Egyptian divinities the essential attribute of their power. When Theodosius destroyed the Serapeum of Alexandria, the Christians were astonished to find a great number of these crosses engraved on the stone.⁴ They are found upon coins of the

 Achaemenides and on Assyrian monuments, where the four-armed cross inscribed in a circle is the symbol of "the invincible God," the Sun, which darts its beams in every direction.⁵

In the third century of the Christian era the Persians placed this cross upon their standards, and the king signed his messages with the title "Brother of the Sun."⁶ A thousand years before that time the Assyrian kings Samsivul and Asshurnazirpal had worn suspended around their necks, as

¹ On those, for example, of the Syrian king Alexander Bala, and of the Baetrian Hermaeus. We even find almost the complete form of the *labarum* on coins of the Indo-Scythian kings. (See W. Madden, *The Numismatic chron.*, xvii. 293.)

² Eckhel, viii. 88. See in the works of Longperier (ii. 250), two standards from Trajan's Column. Vegetius (ii. 13) says that the cohorts were divided into centuries, each having its *cerillum*, or military ensign, on which was a figure. (See Vol. V. p. 86, and Vol. VI. p. 230, two *cerilla*.) The soldiers therefore were accustomed to see on their standards the figure X, which is the first part of the monogram.

³ So called because it can be represented by four *gammuts*, i.e., crossed. This figure has been found among the Scandinavians (Worsae, *Les Temps préhist. du Nord*). The six-rayed circle of the Gallic helmets (Vol. III. p. 249) was a representation of the Sun or of the Divinity, as was the wheel which the city of Rome bears on a coin of Hadrian commemorating the ninth centenary of the foundation of Rome (Vol. V. p. 351), and that of Jupiter found at Landouzy-la-Ville (*Rev. arch.*, Jan., 1881).

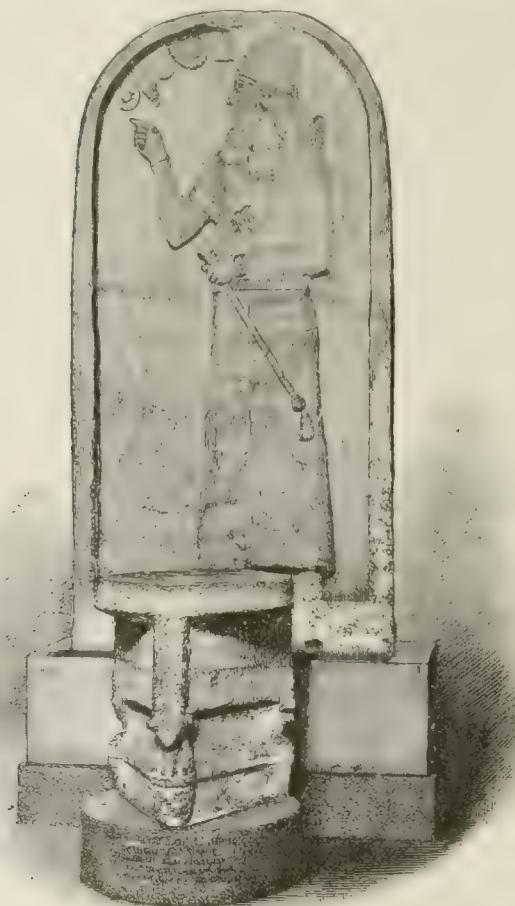
⁴ "The pagans explained," says Socrates (*Hist. eccl.*, v. 17), "that these crosses signified the future life." Cf. Raoul Rochette, *Mémoire sur la croix auxie*, vol. xvi. 2d part, pp. 237 et seqq. of the *Mém. de l'Acad. des inscr.*

⁵ Zahn, *Constantin und die Kirche*, p. 14; Bureckhardt, *Die Zeit Constantines*, p. 350. The plastic symbol of the Assyrians represents the Sun by a disk in which is inscribed a cross, sometimes with rays between the arms.

⁶ Tertull., *Apol.* 15, and Amm. Marell., xvii. 5. See in Layard's *Workshop of Mithras* (pl. x. No. 14) a hemispheroid of agate, with a crescent above it and a six-branched star, representing the Sun. Artaxerxes bore one of these figures upon his tiara (see p. 133).

bishops of the Christian Church do now, the equilateral cross, a symbol of the divinity.¹

Ideas and their symbols travel as men do, and with them.²



ASSHURNAZIRPAL, KING OF ASSYRIA (884 B. C.).³

surmounted by a cross. The pagans, therefore, were extremely familiar with the cross in its different forms, as the symbol of victory or of divine power, especially as a representation of the

¹ According to Oppert (*Etudes assyr.* p. 166), the name of this cross is *lubar*, — a word whose significance will later be explained.

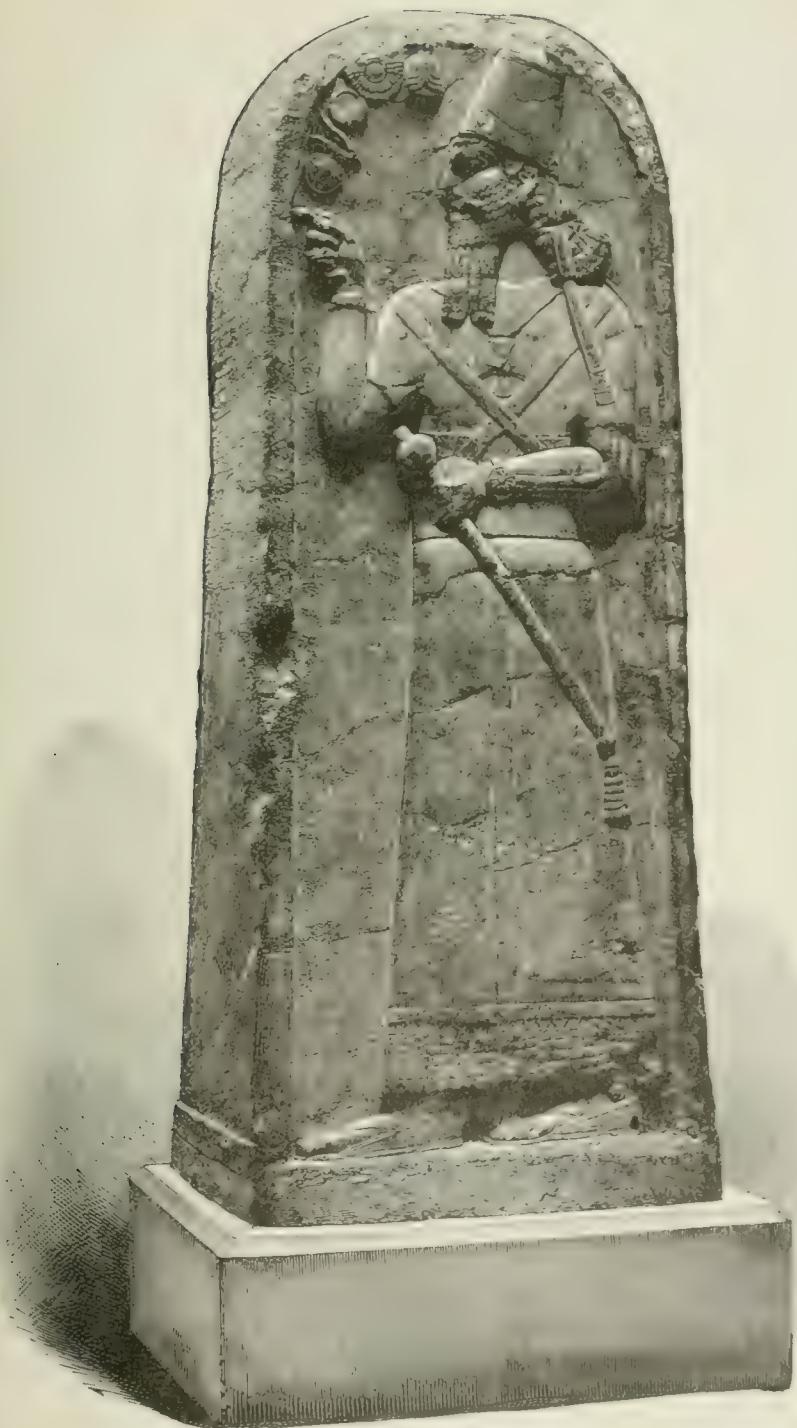
² What journeys, for instance, have our popular tales made, — the lightest and most fragile of things; many of them have come to us from India.

³ *Oeuvres* of Longpérier, i. 170. See also, p. 111, a coin of Elagabalus, "Priest of the Sun," with a star.

⁴ Monolith found at Nimrud, at the entrance of the N. W. Palace (British Museum).

When the West was invaded by the Oriental cults and those Chaldaean diviners who made their way everywhere, many beliefs and symbols of these old religions penetrated the Roman world, where the symbol of the Sun must have been as well known as the solar cult was popular. Roman horsemen on Trajan's Column bear upon their bucklers an eight-rayed star, which to them was perhaps an ornament merely, but for the Assyrians a representation of the Sun;³ on the reverse of a coin of Gallienus,

Apollo held a sceptre



SAMSIVUL, ASSYRIAN KING, SON OF SHALMANESER, 824 B.C. (BRITISH MUSEUM).

Sun,—at that time their great divinity; and Constantine incurred no risk of a military tumult when he utilized the double meaning of the symbol in placing upon his own helmet and on the weapons of his soldiers the cross which both pagans and Christians could accept without conscientious scruples.¹

The word *labarum* is neither Greek nor Latin, but Chaldaean, being derived from *labar*, which in the Assyrian language means "duration, eternity." While taking from the Orientals the name of his new standard, Constantine very naturally took from them also the symbol of their god, whom we shall soon see he had himself long worshipped. Paganism, therefore, furnished the principal elements of the *labarum*, and even its name.³

According to Eusebius, who saw this standard in the last years of the reign, it was a spear with a transverse bar attached to it, from which hung a purple cloth adorned with precious stones, having the heads of Constantine and his two sons embroidered on it in gold, and above it a gold wreath surrounding the monogram. To the Christian soldier the bar represented the arms of the Cross;⁴ to the pagan it was a part of the construction of the standard, which, as usual, bore the Emperor's head and the customary gold wreath. The old

¹ The Church historians very naturally saw in this confusion—which pleased the Emperor, because it existed also in his own mind, and because it served his policy—a means of Christian propaganda ingeniously devised by him. "He put the cross upon the *labarum*," says Sozomenus (*Hist. eccl.* i. 4), "so that the soldiers, accustomed to venerate the military standard, should come by insensible degrees to venerate the Christ, whose symbol they had before their eyes, and that thus, forgetting their idols, they should come to honor the true God."

² Apollo holding a sceptre surmounted by a cross. Reverse of a coin of Gallienus. Mr. Lewis, of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, the owner of this coin, which is unique, has had the kindness to send me a galvanoplastic reproduction of it.

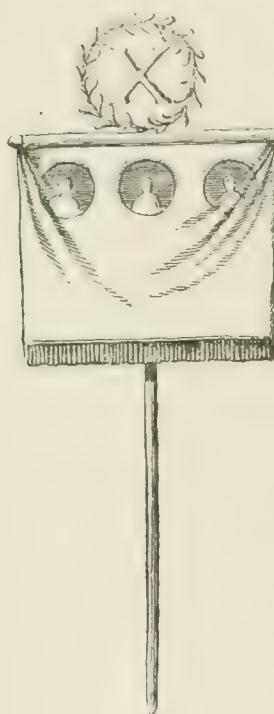
³ Oppert, *Études assyri.* p. 166, and *Erpéd. en Mésopotamie*, ii. 293. It is probable that the word *labarum* was in use from the time of Constantine; but this is not certain, for Eusebius never employs it, and it is found, I believe, for the first time in the writings of any author, seventy years later in Sozomenus (i. 4). Dueange, in his *Glossarium*, derives it from a German word *lap*, a piece of cloth,—which is not probable.

⁴ Tertullian (*Apol.* 16) a century earlier, tells us what Christians thought in looking at the standards: "The images you attach to them, the drapery with which you adorn them, are the decoration of the cross." Stockbauer (*Kunstgeschichte des Kreuzes*, p. 29) says: "The *labarum* of Constantine, as Eusebius describes it, was . . . nothing new; it was only a *ceremonium*, which the Romans had long used, and Constantine had seen numberless times on the ancient monuments." The only difference, he adds, was the monogram inscribed in the wreath; and we have explained that this monogram offended no one, since it very probably had its simplest form, X, which was the figure borne by the *rexillum* of one of the legions.



APOLLO.²

cohorts regarded the eagles of the legions as their divine protectors (*numina legionis*), and kept them in a sanctuary¹ in the camp; the new will regard this *labarum*—called by a name mysterious to them, and supposed to be magical—as a fetich endowed with peculiar virtues; it was believed that he who bore it was never wounded in battle.²



THE LABARUM.

At what period was the faith in the miraculous standard established?³ The ecclesiastical writers consider the famous vision to have preceded the battle of the Milvian Bridge (312). But this war was entirely political, and had not the religious character which has been ascribed to it. Eusebius, who in his *Life of Constantine* represents Maxentius as the great enemy whose downfall should rejoice the hearts of all Christians, forgets that in his *Ecclesiastical History* he has represented that Emperor as almost a believer.⁴ In making war upon Maxentius, Constantine attacked a rival whose possessions he coveted; it was not the execution of divine vengeance against the persecutor of the Christians, since Maxentius had never persecuted them,⁵ and Constantine was himself at that very time a pagan. On the eve of his expedition against Rome, the orator Eumenius reminded him of the temples he had restored and the sacrifices he had performed;⁶ on his entrance into

had never persecuted them,⁵ and Constantine was himself at that very time a pagan. On the eve of his expedition against Rome, the orator Eumenius reminded him of the temples he had restored and the sacrifices he had performed;⁶ on his entrance into

¹ Herod., iv. 4. The place where the eagles were deposited became a sacred asylum (Tac., *Ann.* i. 36). Eusebius makes an oratory of that in which the *labarum* was placed. During the Republic, the standards were kept, in time of peace, in the *aerarium*, which was regarded also as a consecrated place.

² Eusebius, *Life of Const.* i. 31 and 70. Tertullian (*Apol.* 15) says of the respect of the legions for their standards: *Religio tota castrensis signa veneratur, signa jurat, signa omnibus deis praeponit.* The pagan temples also had their banners, *signa templorum* (*Hist. Aug. in Gall.* 8), to which certain peculiar virtues were attributed. These old beliefs prepared the way for faith in the *labarum*.

³ The book of Eusebius contains not a single date; he places the construction of the *labarum* in the time of the expedition against Maxentius, but gives it its marvellous effects only in the war against Licinius.

⁴ *Hist. eccl.* viii. 14.

⁵ Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* viii. 14; Tillemont, *Mém. eccl.* v. 73–100, 103, and 120.

⁶ . . . *Diis immortalibus ferre quae . . . voreras* (*Pan. vet.* vii. 21). *Augustissima illa*

Autun, some days earlier, there had been brought out to meet him and do him honor the statues of all the gods.¹ Also he attached his signature without repugnance, in 311, to the edict of Galerius, which contained severe language towards the Christians. The toleration which this edict proclaimed agreed with Constantine's policy, and the pagan formulas contained in it did not contradict his belief. One of his coins, of the year 307, bears the pagan legend: *Genio Caesaris.*

However, as often occurs, the legend handed down by Eusebius and Lactantius must have had an historic foundation. The Christians unconsciously were becoming a political party, and their favor was a matter of concern to the Emperor. Under one form or another, he often sought to win their good will without offending the pagan majority of his subjects by a conspicuous acceptance of the faith lately an object of condemnation. The affection of the early Christians for symbolism is well known; and by many figures borrowed from pagan customs they revealed their faith to the adepts, while concealing it from the profane. The sign that Constantine had given to his soldiers gave offence to no one, and yet sufficed, so long as he was obliged to practise a certain reserve, to make known his secret intentions to those interested.

Constantine was above all a statesman; he regarded religion as a means of government; and many rulers, among the greatest who have reigned, have thought likewise. As a private individual, it is probable that he would have concerned himself but little with the religious questions of his time; as an emperor, he carefully examined both sides. One party, lukewarm in its faith, doubtful as to its gods, having but little confidence in their power, is a great flock which follows the old ways because it has followed them. The other, an ardent and well-organized minority, breaking out for itself, in spite of all obstacles, a new path, and marking that path with its own blood, has proved amid tortures its inde-

de libra tantis donariis hominum statis ut jam certa non quia ruit. Jam non est vocare ad se tempore videantur, praeceps Apollon (vid.). . . . Et mox, rehinc ut et deo catere, . . . Cirea tria, Constantini, vestigia uerbis et imperio consenserunt. I. 22).

¹ In the year 311. *Omnium deorum simulacra uenientia misit Procurat. viii. 8).*

² Genius having a modius on his head, and holding a patera and a cornucopia (Medium bronze.) Reverse of a coin of Constantine.



GENIO CAESARIS.²

structible force; and its attention appears so fixed upon heaven that it seems likely to give no cause of anxiety to the masters of this world who may hereafter share its faith. The former are those half-hearted adherents with whom a ruler loses the battle; the latter, those believers who insure his victory. But many who no longer held to paganism by mental ties, held to it still by customs, and took pleasure in its ceremonial; so that if the members of the two societies had been counted, there would probably have been twenty times as many in the old as in the new: the number, therefore, on one side balanced the zeal on the other. Moreover, the edict which under Diocletian had expelled the Christians from the legions and from public office not having been repealed, the army and the administration remained pagan. Eight years after this, in 320, Constantine was still saluted in the camps, by officers and soldiers, with the old pagan cry: "Augustus, may the gods preserve thee!"¹

A situation like this called for extreme prudence, and hindered the Emperor from prematurely taking sides with either of the two adversaries, although he doubtless early became aware that on the religious question the imperial government would be obliged to change its policy. During his long residence in the East he had observed the strong organization of the churches; he had seen the enthusiasm of the Christians in the presence of death, and the pity which began to spread among heathen populations for the innocent victims. His father's toleration, the failure of the late measures against Christianity, and lastly, the position taken by his personal opponents, Galerius and Maximin, at the head of the pagan party,—all had counselled him, from the time of his accession, to pursue a favorable course towards these persecuted believers whom so many Emperors had vainly tried to conquer.

For two hundred years the moral history of the world had been that of the persevering efforts of philosophy to bring together those ideas of the divinity which were local and individual expressions of the religious sentiments; and these conceptions had been so thoroughly blended and fused that from this rich mass of precious ore had been formed by degrees the statue of the one God, already visible to many. The local deities had lost their personality and

¹ *Codex Theod.* vii. 20, 2. Julian's army was almost entirely pagan (*Julian, Letters*, 3, 8).

assumed a general character. They were now only the diverse manifestation of that Supreme God whom Constantine suffered his official orators to invoke in his presence, and to whom the pagan Hierocles subjected all the lower powers.

"But this great God is ours," the Christians replied to him, "and it is his worship which you forbid."¹ The more prudent, through fear of falling back into polytheism, gave him no name; they vaguely called him "the Divinity" (*Divinitas*).² Hadrian, not even venturing to designate him thus, had built temples to stand empty of any image whatever, and only to be filled by the religious thought. Others, having need of a god whom they could see and touch, called him Serapis or Mithra,³ Apollo or the Sun; Mercury, the modest servant of the gods and of commerce, became "the very sacred, august, and great Preserver of the world."⁴ Those whose piety sought violent emotions went to Mithra, "the invincible hero who drives away the darkness." By the mysterious ceremonies of his cult, by the baptism of blood and the long hierarchy of his believers,⁵ he attracted the soldiers: in the camps of the Danube



MITHRA.

¹ See Vol. VI. p. 401 *et seqq.* the progress of ideas towards divine unity in the midst of pagan society.

² Or the *verum arbiter deus qui spectat nos ex alto*: or Force, illa vis, illa majestas fundi et nefundi discriminatrix quae omnia meritorum momenta perpendit, librat, examinat . . . (*Pan. vet. x.* 6 and 7). Eumenius speaks in the same way in the *Pan. vet. viii.* 10: . . . *Dicina illa mens quae totum mundum nunc gubernat . . . quidquid cogitare illuc facit.*

³ Mithra, "the daily sky," is identified with *Sol*, whose name is also borne by Serapis (Orelli, No. 1,892). Macrobius (*Saturn.* i. 17-23) sees in all the gods only personifications of solar virtues: *diversae virtutes Solis nomina diis dederunt, et annus deos referri ad Salem.* See in the *C. I. L.* vol. vi. Nos. 743-756, and in the *Additamenta* (*ibid.* Nos. 3,722-3,728) the numerous inscriptions referring to the worship of Mithra.

⁴ Orelli-Henzen, Nos. 1,061 and 1,408. Doubts exist in regard to the authenticity of one at least of these two inscriptions: but according to Saint Justin the pagans called Mercury "the Divine Reason," and Ammianus Marcellinus, *metuere et luciar sensus.* He was very popular with the Gauls: Caesar regarded him as one of their great gods (*Bell. Gal.* vii. 16). The Arverni honored him particularly, and the Treasure of Bernay, now in the *Cabinet de France*, was originally in one of his temples.

⁵ Roman statuette of bronze (*Cabinet de France*, No. 2,950).

⁶ Wilmanns, No. 134. See in Vol. IV. p. 185, the bass-relief of Mithra with the solar char-

and the Rhine are found numerous traces of their worship of Mithra. Apollo, a purified representation of Mithra,¹ was the god

of the wind, the author of being and of thought.² The Christians did not regard all his oracles as false; they believed that a priestess of Apollo, the Erythraean Sibyl, had announced the coming of Christ.³ Of all the gods of the Graeco-Roman Olympus, he alone, notwithstanding the increasing scepticism, could not be renounced or called useless, since he was the same with the Sun, whom Aurelian called "the unquestionable god" (*deus certus*).⁴ The radiant heavenly body which gives warmth, light, and life, whereby all live, without which all die, had been,



THE SUN.⁵

under various names, the great divinity of the third century, and

in the upper part. The worship of this divinity was very widely spread in Gaul. An inscription found at Eauze in 1881 (*Revue épigr. du Midi*, No. 277) shows it established in that city, as also in Lyons, Narbo, and many other cities. The baptism of the worshippers of Mithra was to them like a new birth, and they had religious repasts, fastings, and ascetic practices. Their priests made the sign of the cross on the forehead of the initiated, consecrating them "to fight with Mithra in the struggle between light and darkness." There were seven of these initiations (Saint Jerome, *Letter 107*).

¹ Mithra was the same as Apollo. Antiochus, king of Commagene, constructed for himself on the summit of Nemroud-Dagh (6,500 feet high) a magnificent tomb, where he placed the statue of Apollo-Mithra (*Rev. arch.*, July, 1883, p. 57).

² Plutarch, *On the Decay of Oracles*, 7 and 42.

³ Eusebius, *Disc. of Const. to the Nicæan Fathers*, 18, and Lactantius, *Inst. div.* iv. 19, 48.

⁴ *Aug. Hist.*, Ann. 14. Apollo had been the favorite god of Augustus. Cf. Boissier, *La Religion romaine d'Auguste aux Antonins*, ii. 417. We have seen that Diocletian consulted the oracle of Apollo before deciding on the persecution of the Christians.

⁵ The Sun represented as a youth, crowned with rays. Base of a candelabrum

was more than ever that of the fourth. The Constantinian family had chosen the Sun as their divine protector. Claudius II., the head of this house, Aurelian, whose mother was a priestess of the Sun, and Constantius Chlorus, had specially adored this divinity. The orator Eumenius, addressing himself to Constantine, in 310, on occasion of a great solemnity, reminded him of his hereditary god, *Apollinem tuum*.¹ Many of the coins of this Emperor bear on the reverse the legend, *Soli invicto*. Some, belonging to the period when Constantine was in alliance with Licinius, add these words; *Comiti Augustorum*, “to the counsellor, the comrade, of the Augusti.”² Others represent Constantine himself with solar⁴ attributes, the head surrounded by rays; and in one of his *Orations*, Julian represents Jupiter saying to Apollo: “O my son, why did you not strike with your keen dart this mortal who has dared to desert your worship?” After Constantine had

consecrated to Mithra (second century A. D.), Museum of the Louvre (Froehner, *op. cit.* No. 124).

¹ Apollo was also one of the chief divinities of Roman Gaul; cf. Héron de Villefosse, *Les Antiquités d'Entraunes*, 1879.

² Eckhel, vii. 74. This legend is on a coin of the Caesar Crispus, which belongs, therefore, between 317 and 326.

³ Engraved stone from the *Cabinet de France* (17 millim. by 11), No. 1.601 of the Catalogue. This pleasing intaglio of Roman work represents the god of travel and commerce, wearing the winged *petasus* and standing before an altar on which is placed a *pedum*, or travelling staff. At the side of the altar a column, perhaps a milestone, is surmounted by a globe, and the branch of a tree is attached to it.

⁴ Cohen (vol. vi. p. 108, No. 100). With the radiate crown, and the legend *Soli invicti aeterno Aug.* This confusion existed in the minds of so many that we even find in Eusebius (*Life of Const.* i. 43) an involuntary allusion to *Sol invictus* when the historian compares Constantine to the rising sun which sheds light over all the earth.



MERCURY.³

become avowedly Christian he still preserved respect for the god of his fathers ($\theta\epsilon\circ\nu \pi\alpha\tau\rho\omega\nu$) ; he never allowed the statues of Apollo

THE SUN.¹

to be insulted ; he placed several of them in Constantinople, and caused a bronze figure of the god to be brought from Ilium which he placed on a porphyry column, adding a radiate crown to the figure's head. These images were to him at that time objects of art, preserved, like the Jupiter of Dodona and the Muses of Helicon, for the adornment of his capital.

But it seems to me that we may also discern in this selection a feeling of respect for the divinity whose protection he had implored as a boy and in his early campaigns.

In those days of religious confusion we must not expect to find the well-defined conceptions which our complete mental freedom gives us. Many pagans believed that the

THE SUN.⁴

Christians' God was the Sun.³ Constantine seems to have held this view ; and we have reason to believe that for many years he identified the Sun and the Christ, — his paternal divinity with him whose image Alexander Severus had placed in his *lararium*, and whose divine power Galerius, in the edict of 311, had

lately acknowledged.

To Saint John, Jesus Christ is the Light of the World which shall illuminate Jerusalem,⁵ as to Eusebius, Gregory of Nyssa, and Saint Augustine, he is the Sun of Righteousness which enlightens the human race. Accordingly, the apostle's thought was embodied upon a Christian monument by giving the Christ the radiate crown which belongs to Apollo.⁶ Christian inscriptions apply to the first

¹ SOL INVICTO COMITI. Radiate head of the Sun on a small bronze of Constantine.

² SOLI INVICTO. The Sun, with radiate crown, in a mantle, standing, raising the right hand and holding a globe. (Reverse of a small bronze of Constantine.)

³ . . . *Alii Solem credunt Deum nostrum* (Tertull., *Apol.* 16).

⁴ SOLI COMITI AVG. The Sun, with radiate crown, standing, presenting to Constantine a globe surmounted by a Victory : between them a captive ; underneath, S. M. T. (Reverse of a gold coin.)

⁵ *Saint John*, viii. 12 : $\epsilon\gamma\omega \epsilon\mu\iota \tau\delta \phi\omega\varsigma \tau\omega\bar{\nu} \kappa\sigma\mu\omega\varsigma$. *Ibid.* ix. 5 ; xii. 46 ; *Isaiah*, ix. 1-3. Saint Cyprian says of Jesus Christ : *Est lux et dies* (*Opera*, p. 208, edit. of 1626) ; *sol verus et dies verus* (pp. 157 and 215).

⁶ Garucci, *Pitture veteri*, pl. 1.713. In Julian's theology (*Eis tōv βασιλέα ΖΗλων*) the Sun, the visible image of the invisible god, in certain respects resembles the *λόγος* of Plato, and God the Son, of Christian theology.

THE SUN.²

day of the week, "the Lord's day," the name of the Sun's day;¹ and the habit of the early Fathers of comparing the coming of the Christ to the rising of the sun authorized the Church to fix as the date of the nativity the day on which it had been customary to celebrate in the temples the *natalis incerti Solis* (December 25).² After so many sanguinary encounters, Christians and pagans at RADIATE SUN.³ last met as friends,—the latter uniting their many divinities into the one supreme God of whom philosophy had taught; the Christians also forming with their three Divine Persons one God, whose name and whose title to the adoration of all men, *divinitas*, the Emperor constantly recalled.

Constantine favored in every way this reconciliation, which political sagacity counselled him to encourage. The division of the months into weeks, and of the weeks into days, each one consecrated to some divinity, is an Oriental usage which gained ground among the Romans under the influence of the Alexandrian astrology.⁴ In the time of Tertullian the pagans honored Saturn's day (Saturday), and the Christians, Sunday (the day of the Sun).⁵ In ancient representations of the tutelary divinities of the week the Sun holds only the second place, and Saturn the first. On a vase, on the contrary, belonging to the middle of the fourth century, the Sun is first, and for the reason that in the interval the pagan *dies Solis* had be-

THE CHRIST.⁶

¹ ΗΜΕΡΑ ΉΓΙΟΥ (Le Blant, *Inscr. chrét. de la Gaule*, i. 355).

² Munter, *Sinnbilder und Kunstdenkschriften der alten Christen*, p. 75.

³ Reverse of a coin of Trajan (gold and silver), with the legend PARTHICO PM. TR. P. COS. VI. P. P. SPQR.

⁴ See, in the *Gazette archéol.* of 1877, p. 31, a learned paper by M. de Witte on *Les Divinités des sept jours de la semaine*. This author believes that the custom was introduced at Rome at the time when Caesar reformed the calendar. The figures will be found in the *Topographia Helvetiae* of Mathieu Merian, p. 51 or 58, according to the edition.

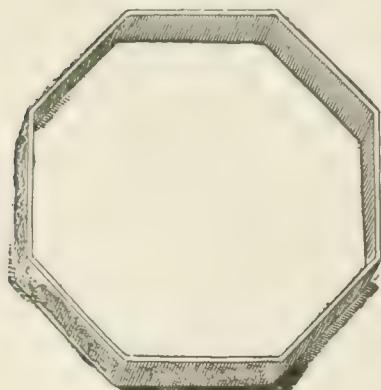
⁵ The Christ with radiate crown. From a painted glass by Garelli.

⁶ *Apol.* 16.

come identified with the Christian *dies dominica*. The days of the week being thus consecrated, each to its particular divinity, the



THE DIVINITIES OF THE SEVEN DAYS
OF THE WEEK.¹



Bracelet.



Figures magnified.



DIVINITIES OF THE SEVEN DAYS OF THE WEEK, ON A GOLD BRACELET FOUND IN SYRIA.²

devout had a prayer for each one of these deities; and since the growing popularity of the solar cult, the *dies Solis* was marked

¹ Engraved stone in the collection of Mr. Maxwell Somerville. The gods which preside over the days of the week, walking to the right, have over their heads inscribed the initial letter of each one's name (Saturnus, Elios, Luna or Diana, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, and Venus). Saturn is veiled like a priest, the Sun has the radiate crown, Diana has the curved veil above her head, Mars is armed and helmeted, Mercury wears the winged cap, Jupiter holds the sceptre, and Venus the apple.

² This little bracelet is only two and a third inches in diameter, and the engraved figures are but two fifths of an inch. The careless workmanship marks the period as near the close of the third or the beginning of the fourth century. On the eight faces of the octagon are engraved the seven gods or goddesses of the week, and Fortune, TVXH, which opens the series. She holds in the right hand a cornucopia, and rests the left hand upon a rudder. Saturn, KPOONOC, comes next in order. He is clad in a long garment, and with the left hand holds a scarf which is floating above his head. The third place is occupied by the Sun,

by devotional exercises in honor of Apollo.¹ Constantine availed himself of this practice doubly to consecrate the dominical day. A law of the year 321 ordered tribunals, shops, and workshops to be closed on the day of the Sun,² and he sent to the legions, to be recited upon that day, a form of prayer which could have been employed by a worshipper of Mithra, of Serapis, or of Apollo, quite as well as by a Christian believer.³ This was the official sanction of the old custom of addressing a prayer to the rising sun.⁴ In determining what days should be regarded as holy, and in the composition of a prayer for national use, Constantine exercised one of the rights belonging to him as *pontifex maximus*; and it caused no surprise that he should do this. The new decrees gave satisfaction to the Church, who on Sunday celebrated the resurrection of the Lord, and no less were satisfactory to her adversaries, who in this *justitium*, instituted apparently in honor of Apollo, beheld an act of homage to their great divinity. A law of the year 313 perhaps belongs in this category of measures which each party believed to have been adopted in its interests. It forbade the branding of criminals in the face, "not to disfigure that which is made in the image of the celestial beauty."⁵ These

HAIOC, radiate, and standing in a chariot with two horses. He holds in the right hand a whip, and in the left a globe. The Moon, **CEAHNH**, is the fourth figure. She wears a double tunic, a double crescent is on her head, and a veil, puffed out by the wind: she holds a lighted torch in her right hand. After the Moon comes Mars, **APHC**, naked, helmeted, carrying his buckler. The sixth figure is Mercury, also naked, with wings on his feet and on his cap, and holding a money-bag and the caduceus. The seventh is Jupiter, **ZEYC**, bearded, armed with the thunderbolt, and leaning on a long sceptre. The series ends with Venus,—a nude figure in the pose of the *Venus de' Medici*. Cf. *Gazette archéol.* 1877, pl. 8, and pp. 83-84.

¹ *Codex Theod.* ii. 8, 1: . . . *Diem Solis veneratione sui celebrem.*

² *Codex Just.* iii. 12, 3. Two exceptions were made. It was permitted on Sunday to continue agricultural labors, and it was lawful to enfranchise a slave or to emancipate a son (*Codex Theod.* ii. 8, 1). In some cases even the Emperor authorized the holding of markets (Orelli, No. 508).

³ Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, iv. 19, 20.

⁴ *Plerique vestrum affectione aliquando et ea' statu adorandi, ad S'il's ortum huius vibrat'is* (Tertull. *Apol.* 16). This was an old custom: on the morning of the battle of Cremona, in 69, a whole legion adored the rising sun, (Vol. V. p. 87).

⁵ **APOLLO CONSER.** The god, standing, his right hand on his head, the left on his lyre, placed on a column. (Reverse of a coin of the Emperor Gallienus.)

⁶ *Codex Theod.* ix. 40, 2. Though it was forbidden to brand the face, it remained customary to brand upon the hands or legs (*Ibid.*, anno 315). Moreover, this law, like so many others, was not observed; Constantius II. ordered the bishops who were condemned to the mines to be branded on the forehead (Saint Hilary, *Contra Coast. Imper.* chap. xi.). In



APOLLO.⁵

words remind us of the language of Scripture, and the Christian influence is evident; but Apollo was also the ideal type of human beauty, and where the Christians saw a reference to Jehovah, what prevented the pagans from seeing a reference to the son of Latona?

It has been usual to place the conversion of Constantine in the year 312. At the same time, during his stay in Rome in that year he neither did nor said anything which indicates a change in his convictions.¹ It has been thought that after his victory he did not perform the customary sacrifices at the Capitol. To fail to do this would have been a conspicuous apostasy in the midst of an entirely pagan city. We know, on the contrary, that his triumphal entry gave occasion for the usual solemnities, and that he was present at the gladiatorial combats, and also at the sacred games² to which the statues of the gods were carried.—always guests at these festivals, which were an essential part of the pagan cult;³ and when we see him filling up the Senate by calling into it many provincials,⁴ we are justified in saying that most of them—probably all of them—were adherents of the old faith, since until the reign of Theodosius the curia remained the stronghold of the last of the gods. Rome, with its hundred and fifty-two temples and its eighty-three shrines, was still full of the splendors of paganism, while those of Christian Rome had scarcely as yet begun to appear:⁵ to Saint Jerome the Capitoline city remained,

³¹⁴ Constantine condemned to the punishment of the cross (*ibid.* 8, 1); later, he abolished this punishment (Aur. Viet., *Caes.* 4, and Sozomenus, i. 9). This plainly was a concession to the Church, and not an amelioration of the penal laws, which he rendered more severe.

¹ The edict of Milan, promulgated some months later, makes a vague allusion to a rescript, probably issued in Rome in 312, the character of which it has never been possible clearly to define. Ecclesiastical writers regard it as a proof of the zeal of Constantine for the new religion; it may have been only a measure designed to secure the execution of the edict of Galerius. Since the year 311 toleration had again become one of the principles of the imperial government; and, more than ever before, the conqueror of Maxentius was determined to make it the rule of his conduct.

² . . . *Homines diebus munerum sacrorumque ludorum . . . te ipsum spectare potuerunt . . .* (*Pan. ret.* ix. 19). In 357 Constantius, then at Rome, set apart the sums necessary for the pagan ceremonies (Symmachus, *Letters*, x. 54), and these ceremonies were not abolished until the reign of Gratian.

³ *Idolatria indorum omnium mater*, says Saint Cyprian and Lactantius (*Inst. div.* vi. 20).

⁴ *Pan. ret.* x. 37: *Ut senatus . . . ex tatu orbis flore constaret.*

⁵ Lists prepared in the second half of the fourth century mention an immense number of temples, and not one church. Certainly there were churches at this time, but they were passed over in silence. These temples, with their extensive possessions and revenues, were

as late as the end of the fourth century, "the sink of all superstitions."

Eusebius asserts that a statue holding the *labarum* was erected in honor of Constantine after his victory.¹ The ecclesiastical his-



THE AQUEDUCT OF AQUA VIRGO. FROM CANINA.

torian has been misled by some obscure words of a panegyrist,—which, however, unquestionably refer to the erection of a statue by the Senate and Italy in the Emperor's honor. According to pagan usage, he was represented with some divine attribute,² which the property of the pagan priesthood, who could not have been deprived of them without a special law, which was not made until the time of Gratian (*Cod. T. cod.* xvi. 10, 29). The enlightened class was long hostile towards the Christian religion; and even among Christians themselves, those who preserved a taste for literature sadly compared the rude style of the New Testament with the elegance of Cicero and Vergil. Saint Augustine does not conceal this, and Saint Jerome feels the same regret.

¹ *Life of Const.* i. 40: *Hastam in modum crucis.* It has been shown how in the *labarum*, at once an old and a new standard, each man, pagan or Christian, could see that which suited himself.

² . . . *Merito tibi . . . senatus signum dei dedit et pace ante Italiam sentum et coronauit.*

Eusebius reconstructs into a Christian symbol. But doubt is impossible when, after this passage, we hear the orator invoke the divine soul spread through the material universe which the Stoics had made their God.¹

About this time,² in memory of the German victories of the Emperor, the dux Senecio, one of his relatives, consecrated a temple to the divinity of Constantine, *numini ejus*,—a formula which may still be read in the inscription engraved to commemorate his restoration of the Aqua Virgo, and on many other monuments.³ We cannot wonder, therefore, that the arch of triumph consecrated at Rome in 315 bears pagan sacrifices, and neither the *labarum* nor the cross. Two words of the inscription, however, *instinctu dirinitatis*, have been thought to be a veiled confession of the Christian faith.⁴ The word *dirinitas*, scarcely known to Latin antiquity, was at this time on the lips of many, since it corresponded to the unconscious travail of souls which were quietly abandoning the

cuncta aurea dedicarunt . . . Debitum dirinitati et simulacrum aureum et virtuti scutum et corona pietati. Quamobrem, te, summe rerum sator (*Pan. ret. ix.* 25-6).

¹ “O thou, sovereign master of the world, who hast deigned to bear as many names as there are human languages, hear my prayer! We know not how thou desirest to be called; whether, as force and divine soul diffused through the material universe, thou minglest thyself with all the elements and givest motion to the world without any impulse from without, or whether, a power above the heavens, thou contemplatest from that high citadel the world which thou hast made,—I supplicate thee, preserve this prince forever!” (*Pan. ret. x.* 26.) This is what was said, in Constantine’s presence, by an official orator in 313.

² Certainly after the death of Galerius, in 311, since that Emperor is not named in the inscription (Or.-Henzen, No. 5,579).

³ *Comptes-rendus de l’Acad. des inscr.*, 1882, p. 12, and L. Renier, *Inscr. d’Alg.* Nos. 3,286, 3,555, etc.

⁴ *C. I. L.* vol. vi. No. 1,139. The cast taken by M. Léon Renier, which is in the Sorbonne, gives no ground for the supposition of certain scholars that the inscription originally bore the words *natu Jovis O. M.*, and that these words were effaced and the present phrase, *instinctu dirinitatis*, substituted. The arch commemorated the tenth year of Constantine’s reign,—313. The inscription, engraved in letters of gold on the triumphal arch which was erected in front of the Constantinian Basilica, and was destroyed by Bramante in building St. Peter’s, is as follows.—

*Quod duec te mundus surrexit in astra triumphans.
Hunc Constantinus vicit tibi condidit aram.*

Muratori does not believe this inscription to be of Constantine’s time, and neither Orelli nor Henzen includes it in the *monumenta historica* of this Emperor. Inscriptions in letters of gold are found only in mosaics of the sixth century, and what we have said of the religious policy of Constantine leads to the conclusion that this inscription is of much later date than his reign. Eusebius, who outlived the Emperor three years, and who speaks at considerable length of the arch of triumph which is still standing, would not have failed to mention that of the Vatican basilica, had it been erected in his time. The inscription, in fact, seems only to recall the memory of Constantine.

old gods without expressly renouncing them, and were on the way towards the God of the Christian faith, without as yet proclaiming his indivisible sovereignty. Six years later, in the festival which celebrated the fifteenth year of Constantine's imperial power, the pagan author of the Tenth Panegyric compares the Emperor to Mars and to the Dioseuri; he asserts that it was by the celestial inspiration of the god Constantius, *divini instinctu*, that his son had defeated both Maxentius and the Franks. Thus within four years of the Council of Nicaea the official orators were reminding Constantine of the apotheosis of his father¹ and of the assistance of that higher Power whom Cicero, Seneca, and Plutarch worshipped, and whose name recurs constantly in the words and in the legal institutions of the Emperor,—in the prayer that he prepared for his soldiers, and in the long rescript which, after the defeat of Licinius, obliterated the effects of the late persecution. The God whom he thus took pleasure in invoking was not so much the Christ as it was the Divinity, whoever he may be, who is enthroned in the highest heaven: *quidquid illud est divinum ac caeleste numen*.² These words are in the edict of Milan, in the message of Licinius to the governor of Bithynia, even in letters of Constantine to the bishops. It is not without intention that he repeats them thus persistently.³ He would willingly have united all the nations subject to his sway in one faith, whose forms might vary, while its substance should be the worship of the one God; and he believed that when this revolution was accomplished, the administration of the Empire would become more easy, the public peace would be more secure.⁴ This same thought prevented him

¹ He himself, referring in his laws to the acts of his predecessors, calls these Emperors gods, *divorum retro principum* (*Codex Theod.* xiii. 3, 3). But we have already remarked on the meaning attached in the fourth century to the word *divus*.

² Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* x. 5: ἐπὶ πολεῖς ἔστι θεότης καὶ οὐρανίου πνεύματος. M. Egger, whom I have consulted in respect to this very singular phrase, has kindly given me his opinion, as follows: "It is extremely incorrect. It is conjectured that this language may express the idea of a vague pietism which reconciled itself alike to Christianity and to philosophy and the other cults. . ." Cf. Lactant., *De Mort. pers.* 48: *Divinitatis reverentia*. In a law published a month after the Council of Nicaea, we find these words, *Pa' u' i' sumat diuinis et proprie- sit* (*Codex Theod.* ix. 1, 4).

³ He says again, in an ordinance of 335: *Quae diuinatis affecta sunt deus* (*Constit. Secundi*, No. 4). *Caelestis numen*, *cael. praesertim*, *diuinum esse*, are words constantly used by Marcellinus (xix. 1, 6, 11; xx. 6, etc.).

⁴ Eusebius, *Life of Const.* ii. 65.

from celebrating the Secular Games, which certain calculations caused to fall in the year 313. This was the greatest of all the Roman festivals, but also the most pagan; and all Italy was invited to attend it. It would have stimulated to the highest degree those passions which Constantine specially endeavored to tranquillize. As there had never been any certain date for this solemnity, the public did not observe this voluntary forgetfulness. Only a few pagans lamented secretly that from day to day respect for the old Roman customs was growing less.¹ But Constantine was well satisfied to have avoided an occasion for disturbance.

II. THE EDICT OF MILAN, AND ITS RESULTS.

BUT why fix a date for the conversion of this Emperor? Chronology sees no importance in this matter. It was not, in fact, a case of a sudden resolve, like that of Henry IV. of France when he exclaimed, "Paris is well worth a mass!" but of slow modifications taking place, in the course of years, in a mind at once circumspect and confused, much more occupied with events than with theology, where the religious conscience to the end was never free from uncertainties. Two pagan authors, Libanius and Zosimus, represent Constantine as going over to Christianity,—the former after the defeat of Licinius (323), the latter after the death of Crispus (326): but the historians of the Church set this date back fourteen years. We have just demonstrated that as late as the year 313 nothing testifies to the Christian faith of the Emperor. In that year appeared the edict of Milan,—the grandest legislative act that sovereign ever promulgated; for fifteen centuries were to pass before the world would again hear similar language.² But this was not a Christian act. It proclaims the equality of all cults; it grants complete liberty for religious observances; and it bears the signature of two Emperors who assume the pagan title of *pontifex maximus*, all of whose rights they preserve. The moment is unique in history; for then seemed to

¹ *Adeo in dies cura minima Romae urbis* (*Aur. Vict., Caes.* 28; *Zosimus*, ii. 7).

² See above, p. 461.



TRIUMPHAL ARCH OF CONSTANTINE.

perish that established religion which, undergoing the fate of all human institutions, had become a useless and odious instrument, after having for centuries secured the prosperity of Rome. But it was only a momentary flash of good sense across the political heavens; no later than the year 325 an established religion was to re-appear, and with it its necessary companion. Intolerance, which under the successors of Constantine let loose again new persecutions.¹

Dating from the edict of Milan, the Catholic Church attempts to prove the piety of Constantine by testimony² most of which is true, but does not give the whole truth, since it shows but one face of this policy, which, without hypocrisy or falsehood, and solely in the interests of the public peace, had two aspects,—one towards the Christians, the other towards the pagans. The latter remains somewhat obscure, because of the scarcity of documents of pagan origin. These documents suffice, however, to render the Constantine of history a greater man than he of the Church: for instead of the imprudent zeal of a neophyte, we see the patient wisdom of a ruler,—a man occupied above all things in fulfilling his royal task and compelling the partisans of the old and of the new faith to live in peace, when, if left to themselves, they would have fallen upon each other in deadly strife.³

The Emperor very early had about him Christians who would keep him informed as to what went on in the churches and among the heretical sects. One of these counsellors, the Arian Strategus, whom on account of his eloquence Constantine surmised Musonianus, was appointed to keep watch over the Manichaeans and other sectaries.⁴ But there were pagans also at the imperial court. Philosophers were received there, and the Emperor took pleasure in causing them to discuss with the clergy,—occasions which, according to the ecclesiastical writers,

¹ It did, in fact, re-appear in 315: for in that year Constantine renewed the edicts of Vespasian and of Severus against those who embraced Judaism (*Codex Theod.*, xvi. 8, 1).

² Eusebius, Theodoret, Sozomenus, Philostorges, Rufinus, Socrates, and the modern writers who have followed them.

³ Baronius (*Ann. eccl.* iii. 91) says that many bishops, returning into their dioceses after the edict of Milan, broke the idols, overthrew the altars, and even destroyed temples.

⁴ Amm. Marcell., xv. 13: *Constantinus cum lenitatis superstitionum quereret sectas, manichaeorum et similium...*

always turned to the confusion of the heathen and gave opportunity for miracles. Thus Alexander, the bishop of Byzantium, matched against a rude antagonist, said: "In the name of Christ I forbid thee to speak;" and the other on the spot became dumb. "This miracle," says Sozomenus, "is greater than that of the Chaldaean who cut the stone with his word."¹ The philosopher Nicagoras of Athens, who in Egypt testified, in an inscription engraved upon a tomb, his gratitude towards the Emperor,² must have been of the number of pagans made welcome at the imperial court. We know that Constantine was for a long time much attached to Sopater the Neo-Platonist.—whose death, however, he finally ordered when the episcopal influence gained the ascendancy over him. "The Emperor put Sopater to death," says Suidas, "in order to show that in religion he now no longer had anything in common with the pagans by whom formerly he had been always surrounded."³ However, until the last years of his reign the Emperor had them near him; and we shall find them at the court of all the Christian Emperors, even Theodosius: it was a matter of imperial tradition and of political necessity. One of the authors of the *Augustan History*, a zealous pagan, dedicates his work to Constantine.⁴ The Emperor exchanged letters with Optatianus, a foolish poet from whom the Venerable Bede refuses to quote, considering him too pagan; and about the year 331 Constantine employed as teacher of eloquence for one of his sons the rhetorician Arborius, the uncle of Ausonius, and, like him, a pagan,—or, like him, indifferent as to either religion.⁵

The republican Senate and the Emperors had had secretaries for the Greek language, even for the Arabic language,—doubtless

¹ Sozomenus, *Hist. eccl.* i. 18.

² Böckh, *C. I. G.* No. 4,470.

³ *Sub verbo Sopater.* He was killed between 330 and 337. According to Eunapius (*Lives of the Sophists*, s. v. Aedesius) he was accused of having chained the winds and hindered the frumentary ships from arriving at Constantinople. He must have fallen under the application of the law against magicians: see later. Mention is also made of another pagan philosopher, Canonaris, who is said to have been put to death. Cf. the Anonymous of Banduri, *Ant. Const.* p. 98, in the *Imperium orientale* of the learned Benedictine.

⁴ Capitolinus, *Gord.* 1, and *Maximini duo*, 1. Tatius Cyrillus, whom Constantine employed to translate historical works from Greek into Latin, must also have been a pagan (*ibid.*).

⁵ The elegy of Arborius, *Ad Nympham nimis cultam*, is entirely pagan (4*p. Wernsdorf, Poetae lat. min.*).

also for other tongues;¹ Constantine was obliged to have them for the affairs of the Christians and of the pagans, each secretary addressing his correspondents in their own language. As early as the year 313 the bishop Hosius was employed in the correspondence with the African churches.² Thus we are enabled to account for despatches of contradictory import, which merely corresponded with the twofold interests which it was the duty of the government to protect. In 314, in order to persuade the African bishops to put an end to the violent schism of the Donatists which was distracting the province, the imperial chancery despatched to them a letter wherein were contained some very Christian sentences³ which it was politic and suitable for Constantine to address to the powerful Church of Africa. But, a few months earlier, he had authorized the pagans of that province to institute, in honor of the Flavian family, priesthoods which were still in existence eighty years later,⁴ and he had given to all the pagans of the Empire a signal gratification by permitting the Roman Senate to decree the apotheosis of Diocletian.

¹ See Vol. VI. p. 224; Foucart, *Sénautes, inédits*, p. 7, and *Bull. de corresp. hellén.*, 1882, p. 369.

² Euseb., *Hist. eccl.* x. 6. Later the Donatists accused Hosius of having prejudiced the Emperor against them, and Saint Augustine says that, acting on the bishop's advice, Constantine exiled them. Hosius was intrusted with an imperial letter to Alexandria in the case of a dispute between the patriarch and Arius, his disobedient deacon. At the Council of Nicaea he sat at Constantine's right hand; we might call him the minister of the Christian cult.

³ . . . *Meum iudicium postulant qui ipse iudicium Christi expecto* (Optatus of Milevi, *Gesta purgat. Caeciliani*, p. 25). See also (p. 22) the close of the letter to the proconsul Ablavius, also De Rossi, *Bull. di arch. crist.*, July, 1865, p. 49. It is not without some hesitation that I quote the text of Optatus. He wrote long after the events with which we are concerned, for he died near the close of the fourth century; and he is not accurate, for he makes no mention of the Council of Arles, and attributes to the Council of Rome acts which do not belong to it. The seventh book of his treatise *De Schismate* is generally rejected. It is well known that documents entirely spurious were often given as authentic. The imperial letter quoted by Optatus appears to me of extremely doubtful authenticity, and the same doubt is felt by the Duc de Broglie (vol. i. p. 290, note 1), — at least it must be admitted, if the letter is genuine, that the Emperor's Christian secretary causes him to employ in 314 language which at that date he could not have used. At that time he was not accustomed to speak of Christ, but always of "the Divinity," or "the supreme God."

⁴ *Tum* (after the death of Maxentius and the subjugation of Africa) *per Africam sacerdotium decreatum Flavian genti* (Aur. Victor, *Cores.* 18). A consul of the year 390 was still pontiff of the Flavian cult (Orelli, No. 3,672).

⁵ Coin of Aegae, in Cilicia. Hexastyle temple, in which are Aesculapius and Telesphorus. (Reverse of a bronze of Philip.)

BRONZE COIN.⁵

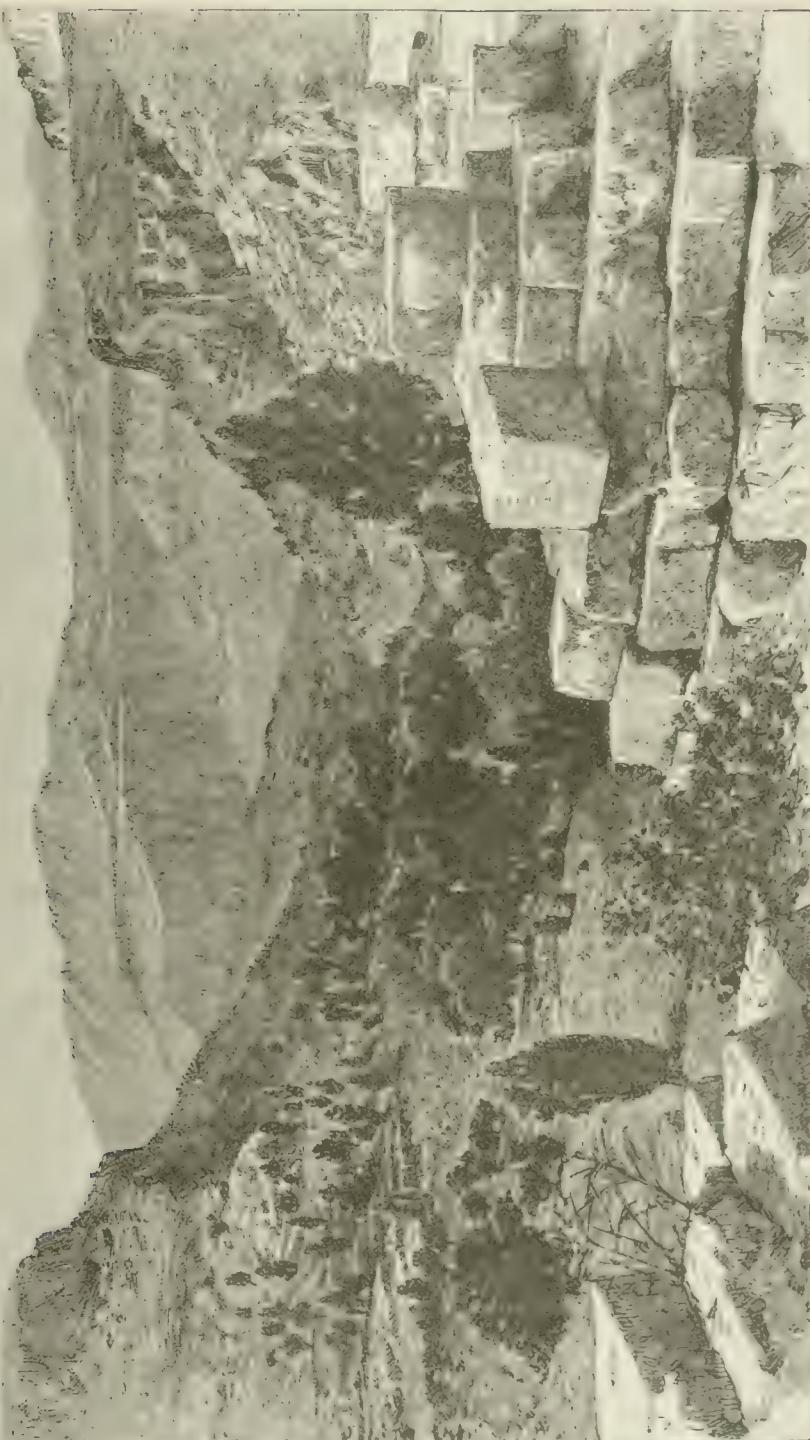
When the defeat of Licinius had subjected to Constantine the Oriental provinces, he annulled there the effects of the recent persecution by an edict, preceded by a letter in which some bishop's hand can plainly be recognized. But although his pref-



ROMAN BRIDGE NEAR APHACA.¹

erences at this time were certainly in favor of the new religion, he contented himself with exhorting his pagan subjects to venerate the law of the Almighty God, without prescribing anything against them. In another edict of the same year (324) he urged his subjects to maintain a spirit of mutual toleration, so that those

¹ Roman bridge near Aphaca, and falls of the River Adonis, now the *Nahr Ibrahim* (after a photograph by Dr. Lortet, v. 64).



RUINS OF THE TEMPLE OF AMADA (AFKA), AND VALLEY OF THE RIVER DONIS (NAIRIPRUM).
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY DR. LORILL.

who persevered in the pagan error might enjoy the same peace and tranquillity with the Christian believers.¹ His acts corresponded with his words: long after the Council of Nicaea, in reply to a petition from the pagan inhabitants of Hispellum, the pagan secretary sent out a decree, in which it was directed, in reference to a temple consecrated in that city to Constantine, that the worship there offered "should not be contaminated by the frauds of contagious superstition."² The contagion at this time threatening these Umbrians was the Christian faith, and not paganism, which was now dying. As often occurs in administrative acts, the imperial rescript quoted back the language employed in the petition, and gave these belated zealots of paganism the protection that they sought against the invasion of their mountains by a new faith.

This double character of Constantine's government appears in everything. At Antioch, at Nicomedeia, at Bethlehem, at the Holy Sepulchre, he builds churches, "which rose like lilies, filling the air with a divine perfume;"³ and he closes at Heliopolis and at Aphaca the temples of the Syrian Venus (which were said to be the haunt of all vices), and later that of Aesculapius of Aegae, — a divinity dangerous on account of his revelations, which placed the person consulting him in communication with the invisible world, whence priests and soothsayers could cause disturbing utterances to proceed.⁴ But at Constantinople he allows the pagan

¹ Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, ii. 26–42 and 48–70.

² . . . *Ne aedis nostro nomini dedicata ejusquam contagious superstitionis fraudibus polluatur* (Or-Henzen, No. 5,580, and Wilmanns, No. 2,843). Hispellum was at the foot of the Apennines, near the Flaminian Road, four miles from Foligno. In this document Crispus is not named with the other children of Constantine, — which dates it as later than the young man's death (326).

³ Euseb., *Hist. eccl.* x. 4, and *Life of Const.* ii. 45. At Rome is shown his baptistery, — in which he was never baptized, — and seven churches claim him as their builder, of which he probably built but one, that of the Vatican, which gave place in the sixteenth century to St. Peter's. It is said that when the Vatican basilica was removed, tiles, bricks, and coins bearing Constantine's name were discovered. Later are given the ancient designs which have been preserved (Ciampini, *De Sacris aedificiis a Constant. Magno constructis*, chap. iv. pp. 28–31).

⁴ Euseb., *Life of Const.* 55, 56. We must conclude that occurrences causing anxiety to the government had taken place at Aegae, for there were throughout the Empire sanctuaries of Aesculapius much more celebrated than that in Cilicia, and Eusebius mentions only the destruction of the latter. His chap. iii. 54, which has as its title "Temples and Idols everywhere destroyed," would lead to the belief in a universal destruction; whereas he mentions (chap. iv.–lvi.) but three temples overthrown, — those of Aegae, Aphaca, and

sanctuaries of the ancient city¹ to stand, as his son afterwards respected those of Rome,² and in the new Constantinople he



SYRIAN VENUS, WEEPING FOR THE DEATH OF ADONIS.³

builds shrines to the Dioseuri, to the Mother of the Gods, and to Fortune,⁴ so that the orator Themistius could assert that Jupiter

Heliopolis. That of Aphaea, which the historian represents as destroyed by the soldiers of Constantine, was standing in the time of Zosimus (i. 58). The temple of Daphne, near Antioch, was in Julian's time deserted, but not overthrown; and it was a bishop of the fifth or sixth century who put an end to the worship of Venus at Heliopolis (Tillemont, *Hist. des emp.* iv. 207). Julian (*Oration against Heracl.* 19) reproaches Constantine with having "despised the temples and despoiled them of the offerings made by the pious;" but he does not accuse the Emperor of having destroyed them, while he does thus accuse the sons of Constantine.

¹ Malalas, *Chronogr.* xiii. 324.

² *Codex Theod.* xvi. 10, 3.

³ Statuette of white limestone found in Syria (Collection of the Duc de Luynes in the *Cabinet de France*). This Venus, in a reclining attitude, wrapped in her peplos, corresponds to the description of her given by Macrobius in his *Saturnalia* (i. 21): *Simulacra hujus deae in monte Libani sicutur capiti obnupto, specie tristi, faciem manu lacer intra amictum sustinens: lacryma visum consipientium manare creduntur.* Aphrodite weeping for Adonis was in all the Syro-Phoenician religions the personification of the sadness of the Earth at the periodical departure of the Sun. This statuette is the object of a paper published by the *Gazette archéol.*, 1875, p. 97 et seq. and plate 26.

⁴ Zosimus, ii. 32: . . . τὸ τῶν Διοσκούρων ἱερόν . . . ποιησάμενος, etc. Zosimus employs, not the word *ταῦτα*, which designates only the habitation of the God, but the word *ἱερόν*, which signifies besides the temple, the space of ground outside consecrated to the God. He therefore alludes to small buildings erected by Constantine. Laetantius (*Inst. div.* xi. 10) seems also to

was the protector of the two Romes.¹ In 312 Constantine had authorized the Senate to engrave his name upon a temple; twenty-two years later he permitted them to reconstruct the temple of Concord.² Temples were even dedicated to the Flavian family; and the rescript of 326, which forbade the beginning of new structures in any city where old ones remained still unfinished, made exception in the case of temples to the gods.³

The Emperor asks from Eusebius many copies of the Scriptures for the clergy of Constantinople; but Athens, which Libanius calls "the holy city, the common delight of gods and men," is loaded with imperial gifts. He accepts from her the title of *strategus*,⁴ and he confirms the immunities granted by his predecessors to grammarians and professors, their wives and children,—a significant measure, for it was adopted at a time when we may be sure there were no professors, officially so called, who were Christians.⁵

allude to new temples built at this time (*temporum novorum dedicationes*). Moreover, the old divinities had already undergone so many metamorphoses that Castor and Pollux had very little in common with the valiant sons of Leda who had fought for Rome at Lake Regillus. Their attributes had become extremely numerous: and we shall not wonder at seeing them honored by Constantine if we remember that they were frequently placed on Christian tombs, as representing the resurrection and immortality. Cf. Maurice Albert, *Le Culte de Castor et de Pollux*, and later, a Sarcophagus of Arles.

¹ *Disc. vi. ad fin.* Eusebius (*Lif. of Constantine*, iii. 48), who represents the Emperor as the destroyer of all idolatry, naturally is unwilling to admit that a pagan was left in ancient Byzantium. Saint Augustine, it is true, says (*Civ. Dei*, v. 25) that Constantinople was *sive aliquo daemonum templo simulacrum*: this was perhaps the case in his time, but it was not, and could not have been, so in 330. Hincius the sophist (*Disc. vii. 9*) complains, indeed, that the pagans of that city were not allowed, under Constantius, to sacrifice to their gods. But we know that Julian, when he visited Constantinople, found the pagan sanctuaries open, and was "received with acclamations" in the temple of Fortune (*Letters*, 65).

² Aur. Victor, *Caes.* 40, and Orelli, No. 26: . . . *Et cultu splendidiore restituerunt.* The consul Faustus Paulinus (325) dedicates an altar to the invincible Hercules (Gruter, p. 47, 9), and Petronius Probianus erects one to Juno (*ibid.* p. 450, 1).

³ . . . *Exceptis duntaxat templorum aedificationibus* (*Codex Theod.* xv. 1, 3). A coin subsequent in date to the year 330 represents Fortune, or the Genius of the city of Constantinople, seated at the prow of a vessel and holding an oar: that is, the helm of state. Later, the image of this Genius would be only a mythological reminiscence: at the period where we now are, it shows that the Emperor still thought it unwise, in the last year of his reign, to change the custom in respect to the coinage. According to the *Chron. of Eusebius, anno 330*, Constantine caused an image of Fortune to be erected, and placed his own statue beside it, before which, on certain days, religious acts were to be performed.

⁴ Julian, *Pan.* i. 8: ". . . All his life he honored this city with praises and benefits."

⁵ *Codex*, x. 52, 6, *anno* 321. Lactantius was a pagan at the time when he was appointed to teach rhetoric in Nicomedia. See *ibid.* 8, *anno* 363, a curious rescript of Valentinian against those who unwarrantably assumed the *habemus pl. sophias*. It recognized a right to immunities only in the case of those *a probatissimis approbati*.

In Palestine religious rivalry made a quarrel between a Christian village, Majuma, and Gaza, the pagan city to which it appertained; the Emperor raised the village to the rank of a city,¹ and the public peace was maintained.

In those regions where dominant Christianity called for the closing of some pagan sanctuary, Constantine confiscated to the imperial treasury all the precious metals contained in the temple, and even the brass from the doors and the roofs. This, Eusebius—taking his own wishes for reality—represents as occurring throughout the entire Empire; and he depicts the ancient gods deprived of their beards of gold or their silver eyes, shapeless and dishonored wrecks, flung out into the streets amid the jeers of the crowd.³ But where the population was chiefly pagan these acts of pillage could be prevented. A decree of 320 forbids that cities should be deprived of the ornaments which belong to them.⁴ Forty years later Antioch and Alexandria, almost holy cities to the Christians, had, the one its famous statue of the Daphnic Apollo, the other its great temple of Serapis.

Christians plundered certain temples of their wealth,⁶ as, in the

¹ Eusebius, *Life of Const.* ii. 5.

² Two divinities standing in a distyle temple; between them the *mem*, or M., Phoenician initial of the name of Marna, the principal divinity of Gaza. (Reverse of a bronze of the Empress Plautilla, wife of Caracalla.)

³ "Lieutenant of the King of Heaven, he pursued the vanquished and distributed their spoils among the soldiers of the victorious God. He took away the images of gold and silver, shapes of error, and sent throughout the provinces and cities men, who, going into the temples, despoiled the statues of their ornaments of precious metal and left to the pagans only the shapeless remains. The priests were obliged to hide these fragments in the most secret retreats" (Eusebius, *Eulogy upon Const.* 8). It is always the false theory of the suppression of paganism by Constantine. But we must admit local acts of violence, as in the case of the persecution of the Christians; for the *lex talionis* is common to the populace everywhere. Doubtless priests were insulted, and altars broken down. Under Julian, suits were instituted against certain Christians for the restoration of silver stolen from the temples. These are occurrences common to all times of reaction.

⁴ *Nemo propriis ornamenti esse privandas existimet civitates* (*Codex Theod.* xv. 1, 1). As his share of the pillage, Constantine robbed Jupiter of his titles, bestowing them upon the God of the Christians: *Deus optimus maximus* (Euseb., *Life of Const.* ii. 55).

⁵ GENIO ANTIOCHIENI. The city of Antioch seated; at her feet a river (the Orontes) swimming. (Small bronze.) See the same type reproduced, Vol. V. p. 155, by a statue in the Vatican, and p. 61 of this volume upon an engraved stone from the *Cabinet de France*.

⁶ Libanius (*Letter 730*) intercedes, in the reign of Julian, for a Christian accused of



COIN OF GAZA.²



COIN OF
ANTIOCH.⁵

time of persecutions, the pagans had plundered churches: this was a form of local disorder that the Empire was not able to prevent. But when they sought to destroy tombs, the attack was very serious upon the ideas and custom of the Roman world, where the family was based upon the double foundation of tombstone and hearthstone; and a law forbade the act of violence.¹

Constantine abolished the penalties imposed on celibacy, and in so doing gave satisfaction both to the Christians and to many pagans;² but he maintained the advantages secured by the Papian-Poppaean Law to the fathers of many children, and he granted like advantages to the *naticularii* who brought to Constantinople the corn of the provinces.³

As the Twelve Tables, the republican Senate, Tiberius and Diocletian had done, and as the pontifex maximus, the guardian of the official rites of religion, was bound to do, Constantine proscribed private divination (319) and magical incantations, which were believed to have the power of life and death. But he preserved the public divination, which was practised according to the ancient customs and could be superintended and controlled;⁴

stealing the money destined for sacrifices. But he does not say that Constantine confiscated the revenues of the temples; he only reproaches him with having impoverished the gods (*Disc.* 27, vol. ii. p. 162, Reiske); and he adds: . . . τῆς κατὰ νόμους δὲ θεραπείας ἐκινησεν οἰδέν εὐ. Julian (*Orat. against Heract.* 17) speaks also only of offerings stolen from the temples. It has already been stated that the government contributed to the expenses of pagan worship until the reign of Gratian.

¹ *Codex Theod.* ix. 17, 1 and 2, *annis* 340 and 349. An ordinance of 331 (*ibid.* iii. 16, 1) admitted three cases in which the wife could obtain divorce, — when her husband was a homicide, a poisoner, *vel similecorum dissolutorem*. The law of 349 recognizes the long-established jurisdiction of the Roman pontiffs in all questions concerning tombs.

² *Codex Theod.* vii. 16, *anno* 320.

³ *Ibid.* xiii. 5, 7.

⁴ *Ibid.* ix. 16, 1 and 2. Another law of 321 orders a consultation of the aruspices, . . . *retento more veteris observantiae*, when lightning had struck a palace or a public edifice, with the condition that the matter be at once reported to the Emperor; that is to say, to the pontifex maximus (*Ibid.* xvi. 10, 1). The occult sciences, harmful to the individual and to the state, were always regarded with disfavor, and justly, by the imperial government. (See Vol. V. p. 506, note 2.) Constantine did not put an end to these practices, for Amm. Marcellinus speaks of them repeatedly, — xiv. 7; xvii. 10; xxi. 1; xxviii. 1; and Constantius renewed these prohibitions in 357 (*Codex Theod.* x. 16, 4-5). To understand the history of the Empire, we must bear in mind that the laws often failed of execution, as is attested by their frequent repetition. We have Christian amulets designed to put the devil to flight (cf. *Bull. épigr. de la Gaule*, ii. 35), and papyri now in the libraries of Paris, Leyden, and London have preserved to us books of magical incantations which are nothing less than manuals of crime (Revillout, *Cours de langue démotique*, pp. 20-21). Diocletian burned some of these in Egypt (p. 375), and we have seen (pp. 417 and 423) that the Christian Scriptures were proscribed as such. Diocletian certainly did not confuse the Gospels with these abominable

and through indulgence towards innocent superstitions, in which possibly he had some faith himself, he even allowed the incantations which were believed to restore health, allay tempests, and secure the harvests against hail.¹

He prohibited sacrifices in private houses,² because being, as he was, a man of order and authority, he wished to bring everything into clear view and under his regulation: but he authorized those made publicly upon the altars of the gods.³ he respected

books: but though he did not so confuse them, many in the pagan world did, and in religious wars governments always make use of the passions of the crowd.

¹ *Codex Theod.* ix. 16, 3.

² *Ibid.* xvi. 10, 1. Eusebius (*Life of Const.* ii. 44–45) transforms, as we might expect, this special into a general prohibition. Constantius, or rather Constans, speaks in 341 (*ibid.* 2) of another law made by his father, dated 333, which has been lost, but is known to have repeated the prohibitions of the law of 321: and perhaps the meaning of this latter law should be also given to that of Constans; it was, moreover, only a threat, destitute of legal sanction. La Bastie (in the *Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscr.* xv. 100) and the Due de Broglie (*L'Église et l'Empire Romain au iv^e Siècle*, i. 405) adopt this interpretation. It will be remarked that the severe law of 341, which says: *Cesset superstitia, sacrificiorum aboleatur insanía*, is subscribed by only one Emperor whose name is not certain, and bears no date of days and month, nor indication of the place where it was published. If it does belong to Constans, there is extant another law of this Emperor, addressed in 346 (?) to the prefect of Rome, ordering him not to suffer the temples outside of the walls of the city to fall into ruins . . . *Intactae incorruptaque consistant* (*Codex Theod.* xvi. 10, 3). Countless facts and the rescripts of Constantine, the oration of Libanius in behalf of the temples, divers passages of Themistius and the author of the *Vetus orbis descriptio*, written in 347, prove the public observance of the pagan cult during the whole of the fourth century. Laetantius, in his *Instit. div.* (iii. 30) shows the power that paganism preserved in the time of Constantine; and the expressions of anger in the *De Errori profanarum religionum* of Firmicus, written in 346 or 347, as well as many incidents in the youth of Julian, attest that, under Constantine, this power had not as yet been much weakened. Until 375, the Emperors retained the title of pontifex maximus, and the curiales that of perpetual flamen (see p. 518 and note 1). The procession of Cybele still took place in Gaul in the time of Saint Martin, who hunted down so many pagan idols. At the time when the Christians put Hypatia to death, there were still so many pagans in Alexandria that Saint Cyril, the bishop of that city, thought it needful to publish a minute refutation of Julian's book against Christianity. Up to the middle of the fifth century the worship of Isis and Osiris was maintained at Philae, notwithstanding the edict of Theodosius which had abolished paganism sixty years before (Letronne, *Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscr.* x. 171–217). Paganism was not definitively extirpated from Egypt until in the seventh century by the Arabs (Revillout, *Cours de langue démotique*, p. 37). See in Beugnot, vol. i. pp. 277–315 and 364–395, a multitude of other proofs of the long persistence of paganism. It is a law of history that the past is only very slowly destroyed.

³ *Quicunq[ue] ad eos existimat conducere, adite aras publicas atque delubra et consuetudinis ritea celebrare soletur* (*Codex Theod.* ix. 16, 2, anno 319). If we compare this language and that of the law just now mentioned with the vague and confused terms of the pretended edict addressed to the provincials (Eusebius, *Life of Const.* ii. 48–60) we shall perceive this latter document is a Eusebian paraphrase. At the same time, the imperial intention is so manifest in the government and in the laws that Eusebius is compelled to let it appear in his amplification in chap. vi., where he represents the Emperor as saying that he is willing to have each man act according to his conscience.



SCENES OF GLADIATORIAL COMBATS: FROM A ROMAN MOSAIC
AT BOGNOR (SUSSEX, ENGLAND).

the ancient law which permitted religious assemblages,¹ and long after his time temples were still built: Constantius and Theodosius in their reigns found paganism in Rome alive and vigorous.² The inscription mentioned on p. 499 attests that in the latter part of Constantine's reign Tuscany and Umbria still had their pagan festivals, their public sacrifices, their games,³ presided over by an annually elected priest, and even their combats of gladiators, which a law of 325 had sought to abolish,⁴ which Constantius found occurring in 357,⁵ and of the regular existence of which, at the end of the

GLADIATOR RETIARIUS⁶

¹ *Religionis causa coire non prohibentur* (*Dig.* lxxiii. 22, 1; fragment of Marcianus, who lived in the reign of Caracalla).

² Orelli (No. 17), speaking of a temple of Remus built by a consul in the reign of a son of Constantine, says: *Vides Constantinius quoque tempore eius deorum tempia passim re'estructa fuisse vel restituta*: and, in fact, a certain number of them are found. A law of 365 forbids the judges to give to Christians the guardianship of temples, *cavet om* (*Codex Theod.*, xv. 1, 1); this guardianship was therefore a recognized public office, at times solicited by Christians. An inscription of Auranitis, of the year 320, shows that paganism at that date had confidence enough in the future to erect to its gods edifices of importance (Waddington, *Laser. de Syria*, No. 2,393). Nearly a century after this, Rutilius saw celebrated in the Tuscan plains the festival of Osiris (*Ilin.* i. 373-6); and in the time of Saint Jerome a temple built on one of the highest summits of the Anti-Libanus was the object of a famous pilgrimage among the pagans (*Rev. archol.*, 1883, p. 213).

³ The Emperor himself in 306 and in 322 instituted, in commemoration of his victories, the Francie and Sarmatic Games, - festivals entirely pagan in their character; for, says Lactantius (*Inst. dir.* vi. 20), *ludorum celebrationes deorum festa sunt*.

⁴ *Codex Theod.* xv. 12, 1, and Eusebius, *Life of Const.* iv. 25. Many Emperors had regulated gladiatorial combats so as to render them less murderous. Augustus and Nerva, for instance, had prohibited the giving of games with the express condition that the encounter should end only on the death of one of the combatants. Cf. Vol. V. p. 321 and note 2.

⁵ *Codex Theod.* xv. 12, 3. Libanius (vol. ii. p. 6, edit. Reiske) speaks of combats of gladiators, given by his uncle at Antioch, about the year 329. In 365 Valentinian forbade condemning a Christian to fight as gladiator (*Codex Theod.*, ix. 49, 81). It appears therefore that these games still continued.

⁶ From a mosaic discovered at Bognor, Sussex (see colored plate; Lysons, *Reliquiae Britanniae Romanae*, vol. iii. pl. v.). The engraving facing this page represents scenes of gladiatorial combats which are fragments of the same mosaic. The gladiators have wings, as

century, we still find proofs.¹ In other provinces Constantine had permitted Flavian priesthoods to be established; two years before his death he promulgated a law in favor of curiales raised to the office of *flamen*.² And many were, like the Emperor, without hatred

VENUS.³AESCUAPIUS.⁴

towards the old religion, which its latest transformation had brought to the worship of the one God. Christian tombs bear the words *dis manibus sacrum*,⁵ and we know Christians had solicited the

the Romans were accustomed to represent figures personating the genii of any profession. See the bas-relief represented on p. 160 of this volume and the note explaining it. The lowest group on the opposite page shows the preparation for the combat; in the middle we see the actual engagement; above, the *retiarius* is borne to the ground, and his helmet, falling off, reveals his face. We have already (Vol. II. p. 376) represented a combat between the *retiarius* and the *sextus*.

¹ *Codex Theod.* xv. 3: *Si quos e gladiatori ludo . . .* in the year 397. It is evident from this case that laws contrary to the habits of peoples could long remain a dead letter.

² *Post flaminii honorem et sacerdotii* (*Codex Theod.* xii. 1, 21).

³ From an engraved gold ring brought from Syria. (Collection of the Due de Luynes in the *Cabinet de France*.) The goddess, seated, wrapped in her peplum, in sign of mourning by reason of the death of Adonis, gives us again the type of the Syrian Venus adored at Aphaca, near the source of the river which took the name of the divine shepherd.

⁴ Engraved stone in the *Cabinet de France* (cornelian, 32 millim by 15), No. 1,490 of the Catalogue.

⁵ *Revue archéol.*, July, 1881, p. 22, and Héron de Villefosse, *Inscr. de Thala et de Haïdrah*, pp. 9, 10.

office of flamen, since the Council of Elvirus in 305 prohibited this to believers.

To protect the public peace, Constantine maintained between the two cults the equality that he had promised to them in 315. Corporations, legally recognized, were at liberty to enfranchise slaves; and the Christian communities, under the title of *collegia*, had long been accustomed to do this. He gave this custom the sanction of law,¹ so that the churches, as well as the sanctuaries of Apollo and of Bacchus, of Minerva and of Aesculapius, of Venus and of Serapis, had the power of enfranchisement.

The temples had immunity from the land-tax; they received legacies or donations, which could also be made to *collegia*:² and the right of asylum was recognized as belonging to temples, statues of the gods and of the Emperor, and even to the place where the eagles of the legions were planted. Constantine recognized the same privileges in the churches.³

¹ *Dig.* xl. 3, 1, rescript of Marcus Aurelius. Constantine (*Codex Just.* i. 13) himself calls the enfranchisement by the Church an old custom (*quamdiuque p'acuit . . . anno* 316). Cf. *Codex Theod.* iv. 7, *anno* 321. It was even a Greek custom. Foucart and Wescher found on the walls of the temple of Delphi four hundred and thirty-five acts of enfranchisement. The passage of time constantly simplified more and more the formalities connected with this act; a book of law of the fifth century, *Syriscus Rechtsbuch*, edited by Bruns in 1880, mentions the *manumissio inter amicos*; and this usage must have been of earlier date than the book which mentions it.

² *Dig.* xxxiii. i. 20, sect. 1, and *Codex Just.* vi. 24, 8. (Cf. Vol. VI. p. 94.) The *senatus-consultum* given under Marcus Aurelius, and renewed by Diocletian in 290 (*Codex Just.* xi. 24, 8), prohibited the making of legacies to unauthorized corporations; but Paulus (*Dig.* xxxiv. 5, 20) declared valid those made individually to their members: hence the latter could accept in behalf of their corporations as trustees. To solicit and receive daily offerings, the temples had boxes set up, as later the churches had. Tertullian adds even: "Men pay for the privilege of entering a temple, and for the place they occupy within it; . . . paganism begs at the doors of wine-shops."

³ *Codex Theod.* xvi. 2, 4, *anno* 321. By an ordinance whose date is unknown (*ibid.* xi. 1, 1, with Godefroy's commentary, iv. 6-8), Constantine is believed to have freed the churches from the land-tax. The persecution having but just ended, the churches possessed very little property, only their houses of worship and cemeteries. This is what the edict of Milan secured *corpori christianorum*, and Constantine could exempt it from taxation without seriously impairing the resources of the treasury. But the clergy assumed the right of sharing personally in the immunity accorded to the corporation. Constantius opposed this by many ordinances (*ibid.* xvi. 2, 15); and it is doubtful whether he maintained the exemption in the case of Church property, which increased daily, since Constantine had authorized the churches to receive legacies and donations. In 360 the Synod of Rimini having claimed this immunity, Constantius refused, *quod nostra videtur dudum sanctio repuisse*, and granted only the renewal of the dispensation *a sordidis minoribus*, and in the case of those of the clergy who carried on some petty traffic, exemption from the tax paid by persons engaged in trade (*ibid.*). A little later, Saint Ambrose said, *Agri ecclesiae sol'ent tributum*, in the discourse *De Basiliis non tradiculis*. In

The pagan priests were exempt from certain municipal burdens,¹ and almost supported by the community.² He granted like advantages to Jewish and Christian priests,³ but refused them to Manichaean heretics and Donatists, who, especially since the Council of Nicaea, were to him, as they were to the Church, rebels.⁴

If we regard the favors shown to the churches without remembering the identical privileges of the pagans, we are impressed with the ardent piety of Constantine. If we bring together all these privileges, we shall see in the Emperor's conduct a plan sagaciously followed out for the purpose of making the edict of Milan a reality. But he did not propose to have civil order disturbed, and the municipal burdens avoided, under pretext of religion. Many persons, to escape from them, became priests. By three laws, of which the last is posterior to the Council of Nicaea, he decreed that there should be no election of new priests except to fill places rendered vacant by death; he forbade the admission to orders of those who by their fortune were able to fill the *munera*; and if a decurion, the son of a decurion, or a *possessor* was among the clergy, he should be removed from his position and given back

respect to the right of asylum granted to the churches, there is extant no law of Constantine; but there are laws of the years 386, 392, etc., which mention it as an ancient right (*Ibid.* ix. 44 and 45). The privileges resulted in so many abuses that a law of 398 restricted it (*Ibid.* ix. 45, 3). This law was in its turn repealed in 431 (*Ibid.* 4).

¹ *Lex Col. Gen.* art. 66, and *Codex Theod.* xvi. 5, 2, anno 337. The latter text applies to the *sacerdotales et flamines perpetuus*.

² Independently of their share of the sacrifices offered to the gods, and of the revenues appertaining to the temples where they officiated. (Cf. *Bull. de corresp. hellén.*, 1881, p. 219, and Marquardt, *Staatsverwaltung*, ii. 80.) Constantine placed the *cursus publicus* at the service of the bishops convoked to the councils of the Church; later, they received the supplies given to public functionaries, *annona* and *cellaria* (Sulpicius Severus, *Hist. sacra*, ii. 55). This right must have been given them early, for in the mind of Constantine the clergy were a new body of public functionaries, and in prescribing that the clergy should be chosen from among the poor, he says that the poor ought to live from the resources of the Church: *Pau-pres ecclesiarum dicitis sustentari* (*Codex Theod.* xvi. 2, 6; cf. Sozomenus, v. 5). Theodoret (*Hist. eccl.* i. 10) places this concession of the *annona* to the clergy at a later date than the Council of Nicaea: in the Council of Alexandria (339) it is mentioned as an established usage. See in the *Codex Theod.* xvi. 2, 14, an ordinance of Constantius which, confirming the advantages given by Constantine to the clergy, extends the same to their wives and children (*mares et feminae*) who are *immunes a censibus . . . et muneribus*. The word *census* is used in this law to signify the tax which might have been exacted from those of the clergy who were engaged in trade or in keeping the *ergasteria vel tabernas*.

³ To the Christians, *Codex Theod.* xvi. 2, 1-2, annis 313 and 319; to the Jews, *Ibid.* xvi. 8, 2, and 4, annis 330 and 331.

⁴ *Ibid.* xvi. 5, 1, anno 326.

to the public service.¹ This principle remained the rule with the Christian Emperors. A century later Valentinian III. said: "The priest who before entering holy orders has not fulfilled all his municipal obligations, shall divide his property among his children and keep only a part of it for himself. If he has neither children nor other kindred, two thirds of his property shall go to the curia, since he ought to be richer in faith than in worldly goods."²

Lastly, Constantine did not relinquish his title of pontifex maximus, which placed him at the head of the pagan clergy;³ and to authorize his intervention in the government of the Church, he called himself the bishop at a distance, the universal bishop, or, according to the etymology of the word, the supervisor of religious matters in the whole Empire;⁴ and he was so by acknowledgment of the clergy themselves. We shall see that the Donatists applied to him for judges.

Neither were the pagans removed from public office, any more than from the altars of their gods. Many inscriptions show them during the reign of Constantine, and long after his time, occupying high offices and priesthoods. A senator whom he had appointed consul was priest of Vesta and member of the college of pontiffs.⁵

To prove the happy influence which Christianity had over this Emperor's mind, it has been customary to call attention to the humane character of certain of his laws,—those, for example, which forbid seizing, for debt to the public treasury, the oxen and agricultural implements of the husbandman, and those which prohibit the separation of families of farm-laborers in the sale of portions of an estate, or the exacting of special labor-dues in the time of

¹ *Codex Theod.* xvi. 2, 3, 5, and 6: . . . *Procul a corpore clericorum segregatos, curiae restitu et civibus obsequis inservire.* Antoninus had acted in the same manner in limiting the number of those who, as practising a liberal profession, were exempt from the *munera*.

² *Nov. Val.* III. tit. iii. anno 439: . . . *Fide maijs divitem quin fientatibus.*

³ It took the bishops sixty-four years of effort to obtain the suppression of this strongly-lived title, to which they wished to give a successor themselves. Gratian relinquished it in 375 (*Zosimus*, iv. 26). This author relates that at the accession of each Emperor the college of pontiffs officially presented him with the sacerdotal robe.

⁴ Euseb., *Life of Const.* iv. 24, and i. 41: ἐγὼ δὲ τῶν ἔκτος ἡτοί θεοῖ καθεστημένος ἐπίσκοπος ἦν ἐγώ. See La Bastie, *Du souverain pontificat des empereurs romains*.

⁵ . . . *Adlectus inter consulares judicio divi Constantini* (Orelli, No. 1,181). Cf. Symmachus, x. letter 53.

harvest. These were ancient regulations which he has only the merit of bringing into force again.¹

The assistance which he attempted to give to poor families, in order to prevent their selling their children, must be mentioned to his honor.² But the endeavor was unsuccessful, we find,³ for the exposure of these unfortunate beings continued; nor can we forget the great alimentary institution that was founded by Trajan and his successors, nor the restrictions which the legislation of the Antonines laid upon the father's right over his child. Constantine even rendered the condition of exposed children more severe. The Antonines had secured to them the liberty which was their birthright; Constantine withdrew this, making them the slaves of those who had taken them up, and deprived fathers of the right of recovering children whom they had abandoned,⁴ at the same time restoring to them the liberty (which Diocletian had taken away) of selling their new-born infants (*sanguinolenti*).⁵

One measure is attributed to him, however, which would have been to his pagan subjects an outrage and a crying injustice. Our juridic collections contain a text, according to which Constantine, committing to the Church a portion of the public authority, is asserted to have given to the bishops the power of judges in their own dioceses. It is one of the pious frauds so common at that epoch. The clergy at this time possessed that jurisdiction which associations of all kinds are accustomed to bestow upon their superior officers.⁶ As early as the first century Saint Paul had counselled the Corinthian Christians to submit their disputes to the elders of the Church. This usage, which was in conformity with the ancient Roman law giving an arbiter to litigants,

¹ See, in Vol. VI. pp. 1 and 325 *et seq.*, the legislation of the Antonines and the ameliorations introduced into the condition of slaves. In respect to the law concerning instruments of agriculture, see Quintilian, vii. 8. Constantine (in the *Codex Just.* vi. 1, 4) fixes at 10 *solidi* the price of a slave ten years old; the ordinary slave (*sim arte*), 20; *cum arte*, 30; he who can be employed as a scribe, 50; or as a doctor, 60; the eunuch *sim arte*, 50; the eunuch *artifex*, 70. We have seen (p. 165) the reign of eunuchs at the imperial court commence under Gordian II.

² *Codex Theod.* xi. 27, 1-2, *annis* 315 and 322.

³ Saint Basil, in his *Homily upon Avarice*, complains that fathers still sell their children. Cf. Zosimus, ii. 38, and Wallon, iii. 412.

⁴ *Codex Theod.* v. 7, 1, *anno* 331.

⁵ *Ibid.* v. 8, 1, *anno* 329, and *Codex Just.* iv. 43.

⁶ Cf. *Dig.* xlviij. 22, 4.

continued, and had no need of legal sanction. The ordinance *De confirmando iudicio episcoporum et testimonium minus episc. accepto ferri*,¹ which is arbitrarily dated 331 A. D., is inconsistent,—first, with the words of Christ, who disclaims judgment upon temporal matters;² second, with a law of the same year, which forbids citizens to refuse to serve as judges;³ third, with another of 334, which forbids the judge in any case to decide upon evidence given by one man only, even were that one a member “of the illustrious order;”⁴ and it far exceeds the recognized privileges of the Church a century later, for we must look forward nearly eighty years, until 398 and 408, before we find rescripts legalizing episcopal sentences of arbitration in civil affairs. Furthermore, writs of execution were not granted by the civil magistrate in case of such sentences, unless where both parties had agreed to accept the decision of the bishop.⁵ All the legislation of the fourth century is inconsistent with this ordinance, which would have thrown into confusion the whole judicial organization of the Empire; and Constantine, so anxious to preserve the public peace, so long carefully holding the balance equal between the two great religious parties, could not have wished, and would not have been able, to subject his pagan subjects to episcopal jurisdiction.

¹ *Const. Sirmondi*, No. 1. It bears no date, Godefroy rejects it, and the Due de Broglie (*L'Église et l'Empire romain*, etc., vol. i. part 2, p. 266) agrees in this rejection.

² He refused to decide between two brothers in respect to the division of an inheritance. “Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?” (*St. Luke*, xii. 14).

³ *Code*, iii. 14. The *Const. Sirmondi* says: *Etiamsi alia pars refragatur. Sozomenus*, in the fifth century, speaks of a similar law (i. 9), but with this important condition: “If the two parties consent” (*ην δοιλωτας*). This is the law of Honorius: *Episcopale iudicium ratum sit omnibus qui se audiri a sacerdotibus elegerent* (*Code*, i. 4, 8, anno 408).

⁴ *Codex Theod.* xi. 39, 3.

⁵ The same advantage was granted in 398 to the Jews, who submitted their disputes to the arbitration of their patriarchs, *ex consensu partium* (*Codex Theod.* ii. 1, 10); and these two laws were doubtless only the confirmation of earlier legal provisions. This jurisdiction was destined, before the close of the century, to become one of the chief occupations of the bishops (cf. Saint Augustine, *Confess.* vi. 8, in the case of Saint Ambrose, and *On the Hundred and Nineteenth Psalm*, in his own case), and the Church gave it still greater importance. The Councils of Carthage (397 and 398) forbade the clergy under pain of deposition to prosecute a suit before the civil magistrate, and the laity under pain of excommunication to seek redress from a judge who was not of the Christian faith. In the Middle Ages we find this ecclesiastical jurisdiction attempting to invade the whole province of civil jurisdiction.

III.—COINS OF CONSTANTINE; SUMMARY OF HIS RELIGIOUS POLICY.

A STUDY of the Constantinian coins reveals plainly this desire not to sacrifice one party to the other. Hopes held out to either, in government despatches, went no farther than to the persons addressed; but coins circulated everywhere, and there remain so many of them with the effigy of Jupiter, Mars, Victory, and especially of the Sun, even with the legend, "To the Genius of the Roman People," or "of the Emperor," that the great numismatologist Eckhel regards the monetary history of this reign as altogether that of a pagan Emperor.³ This opinion, however, is no longer tenable, since a certain number of Constantinian coins have been found with Christian devices, and others in which, on the same piece, the two cults are associated,—the legend *Marti patri conservatori*, for instance, with the cross.⁴ The writers who certify to the Christian zeal of the Emperor from the year 312 refuse to acknowledge this confusion, so disastrous to their theory: impartial history sees in it a demonstration of that policy which was, fortunately, guided by circumstances rather than by principle or by religious conviction.

To conclude, when the Emperor built Constantinople, pagan rites were practised. The first earth was thrown up, in preparing to lay the wall, on the fourth of November, the day when the Sun entered the sign Sagittarius, in the intent that thus the city's fortifications should forever remain under the protection of the celestial archer. When the horoscope of the new city⁵

¹ Coin of Constantine bearing the legend: GENIO POPVL ROMANI.

² Coin of Constantine bearing the legend: GENIO IMPERATORIS.

³ Vol. viii. p. 88. The *Cabinet de France* alone contains 138 small bronzes with the legend *Soli invicto comiti*.

⁴ See W. Madden, *The Numismatic Chronicle*, xxii. 242 *et seq.*

⁵ Glycas, *Bιβλος χρονικη*, part iv., edition of Bonn.



MEDIUM BRONZE.¹



MEDIUM BRONZE.²

was drawn, the philosopher Sopater and a Roman hierophant performed the mystic ceremonies which were to insure its lasting prosperity.¹ In the foundations supporting the enormous column of porphyry, of which a fragment still remains, was placed, it is said, a copy of the talisman of Rome, the Trojan Palladium,² and on its top a statue whose radiate head might be taken for that of Apollo or of the Emperor himself. According to a legend, Constantine concealed in this structure a piece of the true cross

GOLD COIN.³

which his mother, Saint Helena, had brought from Jerusalem. Accordingly, both pagans and Christians came to offer prayers and burn incense at the foot of this column,—the former to Apollo, the latter to Christ.⁴ When they passed through the Forum of the Golden Milestone, the Christians made the sign of the cross before that emblem held in the hand of Saint Helena's statue, while towards those numerous images of divinities which stood there, the pagans made the gesture of silent adoration with which the ancient gods were content.

A statue holding an image of Fortune or of the Genius of the city was erected in the edifice where the senate assembled, as the statue of Victory presided over the deliberations of the Roman Senate.⁵ Every year, on the anniversary of the founding of Con-

¹ Lydus, Περὶ μηνῶν, iv. 2. Πρωτάξιας ὁ ἱεροφάτης: Eunapius, *Life of Sopater*: Suidas, *ad hoc verbum*.

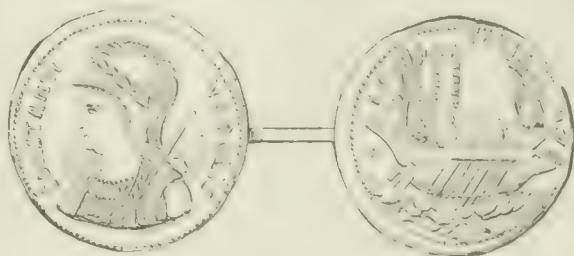
² *Chron. Paseh*, p. 528, edition of Bonn. The Anonymous of Banduri adds (p. 14) that αἱ ἔτεραι πωλλὰ σημειώθηκαν were placed there. Amm. Marcellinus relates (xvii. 4) that Constantine wished to have transported to Constantinople an Egyptian obelisk consecrated to the Sun, but that death prevented him.

³ On the obverse the bust of the personified city and its name, CONSTANTINOPOLIS. On the reverse: VICTORIA AVGusta, and a vessel carrying standards. (Bronze coin.)

⁴ Socrates, i. 17; Philostorgius, ii. 18.

⁵ The Empress Fl. Jul. Helena, mother of Constantine.

⁶ According to the *Chron. Paseh*, ad ann. 330, p. 580, edition of Bonn, this was a statue of Constantine. But the Emperor could not with solemn ceremonial crown his own image every year: and Julian, in throwing this statue into the sewer, on account of the cross engraved on it (Banduri, p. 13), makes it certain that the figure did not represent Constantine.

COIN OF CONSTANTINOPLE.³

stantinople, it was placed on a triumphal car and carried with great pomp to the Hippodrome; when the procession arrived at the

Emperor's throne, he rose and saluted the statue, and placed a crown on its head. As it passed along the streets, all bowed before it and worshipped.¹ But this pagan ceremony was sanctified by a symbol. Constantine had caused a cross to be engraved on the forehead of this image; and Christian priests led the procession, chanting the *Kyrie eleison*, which a pagan without sacrilege could also repeat, as homage to the supreme God.

When Julian, after a public declaration of his pagan faith, approached Constantinople, the whole city, says Ammianus Marcellinus, went out rejoicing to meet him, and gave him a triumphal entry. The "apostate" could not have been thus welcome had there not remained a great multitude of pagans in this city which Constantine had sought to make the Christian capital of the Empire.

If it be thought that the considerations above presented show Con-

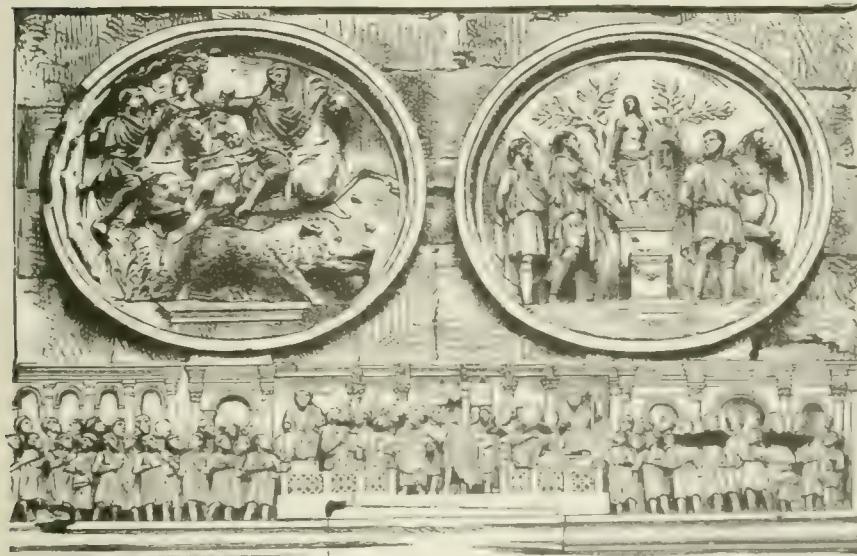
stantine as too prudent a statesman, let the reader observe the triumphal arch erected by him in Rome in memory of the victory which decided his success. This is the principal edifice constructed during his reign,—certainly, at least, it is the only one now standing. For the history of art this arch is of great importance; for

¹ . . . εἰς Τύχην τῆς πολέως προσεκυνήθη παρὰ πάτων. . . . (Banduri, *Ant. Const.* i. 98; cf. *ibid.* pp. 3 and 13). According to Codinus, it was the statue of the Sun which carried this Fortune, *ιπό Ήλιον φερόμενην*. Fortune and the Sun were the great divinities of the time. Many cities, notably Byzantium, had consecrated a temple to the former, Τύχαιον, before which the imperial edicts were read (*C. I. G.*, Nos. 2,024, 4,554). A quarter of Alexandria bore its name, the *Tychaeum*, as we learn from Julian's letter to the Alexandrians, which is addressed *πρὸς δῆμον εὐφρημίσαντα ἐν τῷ Τυχαῖῳ*.

² Bronze statuette from the Museum of the Louvre.



DIDYMAEAN APOLLO.²



BAS-RELIEFS AND STATUES FROM THE ARCH OF CONSTANTINE.

it has bas-reliefs of the Antonine epoch which by their elegance form a striking contrast with the rudeness of the Constantinian sculptures.¹ Upon this work of the first Christian Emperor

¹ The columns, entablatures, great bas-reliefs of the central passage under the small arches, and the Dacian prisoners surmounting the columns, were all taken from an arch of



BAS-RELIEFS AND STATUES FROM THE ARCH OF CONSTANTINE.

religious history beholds pagan sacrifices, and not a sign of Christianity. This arch was too nearly connected with the fame of

Trajan which is no longer standing. The oval bas-reliefs represent scenes of hunting and of sacrifice. The square bas-reliefs represent, —one, a triumphal entry of Trajan into Rome, and the establishment of the Via Appia, the other, the alimentary institution of Trajan, and

Constantine for the Emperor to omit examining the plans made for it, or to neglect their execution. That the *labarum* and the cross are nowhere represented, while military standards of great size are very conspicuously carved upon it, proves that he did not wish, at this period, to exhibit Christian symbols in the midst of Rome, still a pagan city, and destined long to remain so.

The religious policy of this Emperor may be summed up briefly thus: he very early became aware that Christianity, in its fundamental dogma, corresponded with his own belief in one God; he recognized it as a force which must be employed in his government; and he regarded the bishops as state officials in the religious order,—a condition in which his successors long retained them. On their side the bishops respected his supremacy and submissively received his orders, even his sentences of arrest or deposition. Fifty years later, Saint Optatus writes: "The Church is contained within the State; above the Emperor there is none but God."¹ Under the first Christian Emperor no man, except perhaps Athanasius, dared to say: "We must obey God rather than men."² But paganism was also a power, which Constantine was unwilling to enlist against himself: we have seen that he destroyed neither all its temples nor all its privileges.

After the defeat of Licinius (323) the Emperor was certainly Christian as far as he could be so. He called the bishops to his court, he always had some of them near him, and in the vestibule of his palace "he set up before the view of all men," says Eusebius, "the sign of salvation represented in a picture over his head; and under his own and his children's feet, in encrustic painting, exhibited a dragon wounded with a dart and cast into the depths of the sea, denoting thereby the secret enemy of mankind thrust down into the pit of destruction by that salutary trophy placed above his

that Emperor receiving a captive king. Of the fourth century are the two long belts under the medallions which represent Constantine haranguing the people and distributing a *coenobium*. These coarse bas-reliefs and the medals represented in the present volume, with the Triumph of Constantine on a cameo (later), attest the decline of the arts at this epoch. The arch itself, as a whole, is given above, facing p. 494.

¹ *De Schismate*, in book iii.

² Saint Peter (*Acta v. 30*) was the first to utter this sentiment, which has had, and still has, consequences so important.

head."¹ But he never subjected himself to religious authority, and could not take part in religious solemnities, for the reason that he never received baptism. That he avoided till his last hour giving the Church this irrevocable adhesion, was due, not, as Eusebius says, to a hope of obtaining regeneration in the waters of the Jordan, but to an unwillingness to give his pagan subjects the right to say, "The Emperor is a Christian," until he had reached a time when this could no longer be a danger. Moreover, he even took pains to reassure them, by giving, at the very time when he made his long-delayed entrance into the Church, a pledge of his impartial justice towards all. In reply to a request of the provincial assembly of Africa, he dictated a rescript confirming the privileges of the perpetual flamens, and ordered, with unusual solemnity, this decree to be engraved on tablets of brass, "to the end that it might endure forever."² These two simultaneous acts, which gave security to each of the two great religious parties, give also the true character of Constantine's policy. Further, we should observe that he sought baptism from an Arian bishop, that another Arian was the depositary of his will, and that his opinions were so clearly understood that, in the Council of Milan (355), a bishop.

¹ *Life of Const.* iii. 3. It is a mistake to say, with Rapp (*Das Labarum und der Sonnenkultus*, Bonn, 1866, p. 116), that Constantine put upon his coins only the cross, and not the monogram. See, p. 520, the coin bearing the legend *Gloria exercitus*.

² . . . *Ut perpetua observatione firmetur, legem hanc incisam aeneis tabulis jussimus publicari. XII Kal. jun., Karthagini, anno 337 (Codex Theod. xii. 5, 2).* This law confirmed a similar ordinance of 335, which prohibited the municipalities from imposing on the flamens and on the *sacerdotes* the obligation to keep *mansiones* for the public service (*ibid.* xii. 1, 21). Constantius, in 358, issued orders regulating the election to the provincial priesthood of Africa (*ibid.* xii. 1, 46). In 395 Honorius recalled the *sacerdotales* who, under Theodosius, had deserted Carthage (*ibid.* xii. 145); in the ordinance of 412 (*ibid.* xvi. 5, 52), which enumerates the various social conditions, he again mentions the *sacerdotales* as holding the highest rank in the cities, before the chief magistrates and the decurions, and in 413 he speaks of those who, in that city, *munus sacerdotii transigerunt*, and of those who should give the people the usual games (*ibid.* 176). In the fifth century the conversion of one whom his birth placed among the nobles was considered as a desertion. Paulinus Nolamus, after his baptism, writes: "Where are now my friends and kindred? Where are they who once were my companions? They hide themselves from me like a river hurrying away; to them I am as a dead man" (*Ep. xi. Severo*, sect. 3). Victorinus Afer hesitates about receiving baptism, fearing the anger and contempt of the nobles (Saint Augustine, *Confess.* viii. 2). We know of what faith were Auri, Victor, Libanius, Themistius, Symmachus, and Rutilius, persons of distinction and meritorious authors, and we do not know the religious opinions of Ansonius; whence it is inferred that he had none. Even later than this there were illustrious pagans. Honorius erected, in Trajan's forum, a statue of Claudio, who closes not ingloriously the list of poets of the Pagan Muse.

Lucifer of Cagliari, reminded the assembly that Constantine "had distilled the poison of the Arian heresy."¹ In his last moments, therefore, he maintained the faith which, in the interests of the public peace, he had always professed.—a belief in the *summa divinitas* of the philosophers and the Arians, which was that of the majority of the Eastern Christians.

Catholic writers have called Constantine "a vessel of mercy;" the Greeks have made him a saint equal in rank to the Apostles (*apostolis aequalis*); the Roman Senate apotheosized him, and for many years he was worshipped by the soldiers.² He had priests consecrated to his cult, games and festivals instituted in his honor, as the *divi*, his predecessors, had had; and his sons struck, "with the effigy of the god Constantine," medals on which the symbols of the two religions were peacefully blended.⁴

As Bonaparte sought to conciliate the Church and the Revolution, so Constantine proposed to have the old and the new religions live peaceably side by side,—at the same time favoring the latter. He understood which way the world was moving, and aided its movement without precipitating it. It is to the honor of this Emperor that he made good his claim to the title assumed by him on his triumphal arch, *quietis custos*: and history, concerning itself only with human affairs, ought to give him the credit of having effected, without wars or punishments,⁵ an inevi-

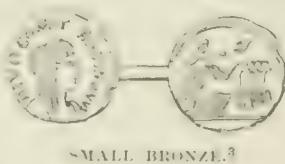
¹ *Pro. Athan. ad Const. emp.* p. 11. Sozomenus (ii. 34) speak of this testament confided to an Arian. It concerned doubtless only his domestic affairs, the political question having been decided by the act of 335, of which we shall speak later.

² *Inter diuos meruit referri* (Eutropius, x. 8). In his *First Panegyric* on Constantius, sect. 7, Julian says, in 355, "The soldiers continue to worship him as a god."

³ Coin bearing the inscription DIVO CONSTANTINI AVG. Small bronze, representing on the reverse Constantine in a quadriga. He extends his hand to another hand reaching down to him from heaven (Cohen, No. 569).

⁴ Cf. *Byzant. Fam.* p. 23, and Eusebius, *Life of Const.* iv. 69. Symmachus, in his famous *Letter* (x. 51), says that Constantine held both religions, pagan and Christian. On one of these medals he is represented with the nimbus (Eckhel, viii. 79, 502); on the other he appears with veiled head, that is to say, as *pontifex maximus*, with the legend, *Dicitur Const.*; on the reverse, a chariot drawn by four horses carries him to heaven. On another medal is the same legend, *Dico Const.*, and on the reverse a soldier carries a globe surmounted by the monogram (La Bastie, *De son état pour l'empereur de l'empire romain*, pp. 39, et seq.).

⁵ Except the two murders, mentioned p. 496.



SMALL BRONZE.³

table revolution. In all the series of the ages, none, king or people, share this glory with him.

We have sought to penetrate the deepest recesses of Constantine's mind, and have found there a policy of government rather than a religious conviction. Let us now observe this policy in his acts.

¹ Coin of Constantine bearing the *labarum* and the inscription GLORIA EXERCITUS. Two soldiers standing, holding a lance and leaning on their shields; in the centre the *labarum* with the monogram X. (Reverse of a small bronze of Constantine.)



COIN OF CONSTANTINE.¹

CHAPTER CIII.

THE DONATISTS, ARIANISM, AND THE NICEENE COUNCIL.

I.—THE NEW CHURCHES.

THE military history of Constantine has been brought down to the date of his victory over Licinius, and we have investigated his religious opinions and taken note of the precautions he employed to prevent his pagan subjects from believing that persecution was about to be turned against them. While he succeeded, however, in preserving peace in the State, he was not able to introduce it into the Church; and since these battles of beliefs were destined to have very serious results for the Empire, it becomes our duty to narrate them. The Council of Nicaea was shortly to inaugurate the reign, new to the Graeco-Roman world, of religion placed under the charge of a powerful sacerdotal body.

After his victory at the Milvian Bridge, Constantine had remained in Rome but a very short time; early in January, 313, we find him at Milan, where the marriage of his sister Constantia with Licinius was about to be celebrated. In the midst of these festivities the two Emperors proclaimed, in terms worthy of the great cause whose defenders they announced themselves to be, a complete liberty of conscience for Christians of all the churches, and pagans of every cult. "Religious liberty should not be denied," they said; "but it should be granted to every man to perform his duties towards God according to his own judgment," — words which should have been engraved in letters of gold on the palaces of kings and pontiffs. After this followed legitimate restitutions made to the Christians. Their cemeteries and churches, and the property held by them in common, were to be restored

to them; and where there were honest holders to be indemnified, this was to be done at the public expense.¹

The edict of Milan in its first part renewed the provisions of the edict of the year 311;² in its second it prescribed the measures needful to prevent the imperial promise from becoming a dead letter. The principle was not new, but the resolution to apply it honestly was so. To the toleration granted by Gallienus in 260, and by Galerius in 311, Constantine and Licinius added equality with the old religion. Henceforward Christianity will be not only tolerated,



BAS-RELIEF OF A SARCOPHAGUS.³

but officially recognized, and protected by the state as much as paganism is. Constantine did in fact more than to grant to the churches the restitution of their possessions, and to the individual Christians of their personal rights and honors; the proconsul Anulius—sent into Africa with the head of Maxentius, that the province might no longer doubt that its former ruler was dead—carried to Caecilianus, the bishop of Carthage, an imperial ordinance recognizing in the new clergy all the immunities which had been enjoyed by the pagan priesthood.⁴

The edict of Galerius had been for the Christians a deliverance. The prisons had been thrown open, from mines and quarries the imprisoned Christians had come forth and made their way home-

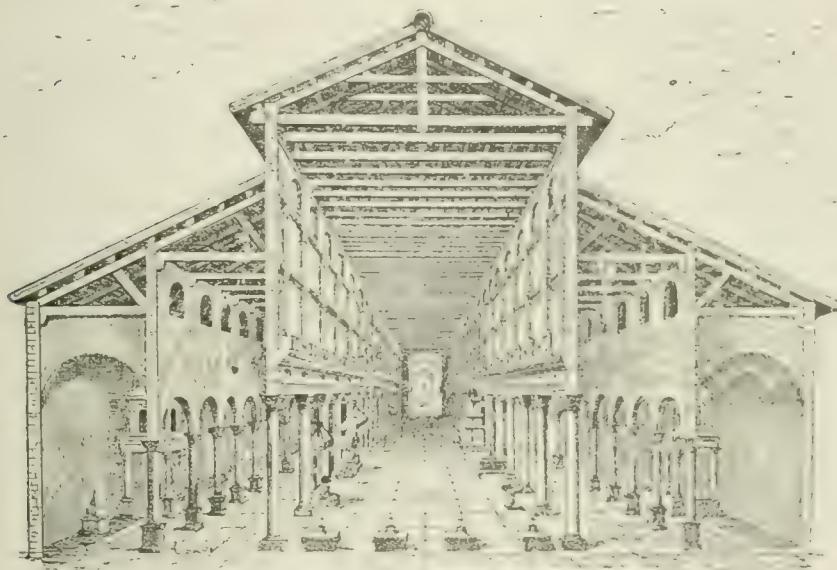
¹ Lactant., *De Morte pers.* 48; Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* x. 5.

² See p. 451.

³ Bas-relief of a sarcophagus from the Museum of the Lateran, representing two churches of the fourth century.

⁴ Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* x. 7, and *Codex Theod.* xvi. 2, 1 and 2. See pp. 506–508.

ward, singing, as they went, hymns to the Lord. They exhibited to their brethren, who came to meet them along the road, the marks of the chains and tortures; men kissed their wounds and implored their blessing; and the hearts of the believers strengthened themselves in the faith, "since Satan might be again at some time unchained." With the edict of Milan the last fears



FAÇADE OF THE BASILICA OF CONSTANTINE.¹

were dispelled; Christianity was legally recognized, the age of persecutions was ended, that of victory had begun. The Christian communities might now assemble in open day without fear of being pursued with threats or insults; gifts to the poor, or "the contributions to the Lord," became more abundant, and a more numerous crowd thronged the religious solemnities. Accordingly, it became necessary everywhere to build churches to receive the neophytes attracted to this belief — which now the Emperor himself protected — by the dogma of the resurrection of the body.

¹ Façade of the Basilica of Constantine which, in the sixteenth century, was destroyed to make room for St. Peter's at Rome. When in the sixteenth century the Vatican basilica was demolished to build St. Peter's, bricks were found, it is said, which bore the name of Constantine. That Emperor doubtless began the building of the church, whose interior is extremely ancient; but the façade had undergone numerous restorations, and cannot be dated from the Constantinian period.

which took away the dread of destruction, and by the promises of immortality, which gave the victory over death.

The new houses of prayer, or "houses of the Lord," *oīkos κυριακός*, were constructed on the plan of the Roman basilicas, or on the enlarged model of the churches in the catacombs.¹



THE CHRIST.³

At the back of the building, where the praetor's seat had been, the bishop now sat upon his throne, *βῆμα* or *θρόνος*, with the priests beside him; before him the eucharistic table and the table for the offerings, where the people deposited their gifts in money and their contributions of food for the support of the clergy and the poor of the congregation.² Then came the mass of the worshippers, the men on one side, the women on the other; behind them the catechumens, and outside the doors the penitents. The catechumens listened for two or three years to the instructions of the bishop and the reading of the epistle and the gospel by the deacons; but they were to

go out of the church before the actual

service began, which hence was called the *missa*,⁴ or the sending forth. At Eleusis only the initiated were present at the mysteries; so also only the baptized of Christ could commune with him. On the threshold of the sanctuary were the water and salt — which the priest had blessed as he mingled them — to "preserve from the attack of evil spirits" those who employ them, "driving out devils from their dwelling, sin from their hearts, disease from their bodies."

¹ Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* iii. 18. In respect to the churches built in the time of Constantine, see in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* x. 2-4, the description of the Cathedral of Tyre, and in respect to the church of Bethlehem, *De Vogüé, Les Églises de la terre sainte.*

² Saint Cyprian in the middle of the third century already calls the eucharistic table *altare Dei* (*Epist. lxxv. 1*).

³ Byzantine cameo in the *Cabinet de France* (light-colored amethyst, 26 millim. by 13). No. 258 of the Catalogue.

⁴ In certain churches the catechumens were obliged to go out even before the reading of the gospel. The first Council of Orange, in 444, prohibited this usage (P. Le Brun, *Explications de la messe*), p. 214.

As a rule the baptistery — *φωτιστήριον*, or place of illumination¹ — was constructed outside of the church, as we still see it in St. John Lateran.

The temple, facing the east because it is from the east that light comes, is bare and sombre like the catacombs whence it is derived. Candles burn in it,—an illumination formerly indispensable in the subterranean darkness, now symbols of the divine light shed abroad in the hearts of men.² In these first days of her deliverance the Church has not the splendors that she will show later, when all the arts will unite to fill her with their magnificence, and to hold captive by sensuous enchantments those whose souls have been allure^d by the sweetness of the gospel words or terrified by the threats of hell. She has now no painted glass in the windows, no carving in the woodwork, no pictures on the walls,³ even the

¹ See, p. 15, Saint Cyprian speaking of the new light which came down into his soul by the grace received at baptism.

² The candles were lighted when the gospel was to be read, in memory, says Saint Jerome, of this verse of the Psalms: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet" (*Epist. adv. Vigilantium*). Candlemas Day, the commemoration of the presentation of Jesus in the Temple, was called the feast of the holy lights, and the paschal candle was a symbol of the resurrection. There was originally for this part of the Christian cult less symbolism and more pagan reminiscence. Candles burning in the daylight were a sign of royalty, of public rejoicing, or of piety. "At the festivals of the Minerva of Sars," says Themistius (*Disc. iv. 49*, ed. Hardouin), "Egypt was brilliant with illuminations; it is the feast of lights (*ἥν καλούσι λυχνοκαίων*)."⁴ This usage was general, and the temples were, like our churches, lighted with lamps. The papyrus of the Louvre, No. 2,423, entitled, "the Antigraph of lights," mentions a gift of oil "for the forty-two lamps of the great goddess Astarte" (Revillout, *Rec. d'Egypte*, 1881, p. 79). In Persia the magi bore the ever-burning fire before the kings; at Rome it was carried before the Empresses, torches were lighted on occasion of a monarch's entry, his triumph or festival (Vol. VI. p. 446, note 4, and p. 112 of this volume), and at the marriage or funeral of private individuals: a lamp always burned before the altar of the Lares, and often before the statues of the gods. When Constantine entered the Council of Nicæa, his approach was announced by the flambeaux borne before him (Eusebius, *Life of Const.* iii. 10). The poet Corippus, in a poem in honor of Justinian, explains this signal,—

. . . *Pronuntius ante
Signa dedit cursu, posita de more lucerna.*

On Julian's entrance into Sirmium the people and the soldiers came out to meet him with torches and flowers. *cum lumine multo et floribus* (Amm. Marcellinus, xxi. 10). The Church wished to pay to the King of Heaven the honors commonly offered to earthly rulers. Even to this day the bishop enters the church preceded by a chorister carrying a lighted candle. A passage of Amm. Marcellinus (xiv. 1) shows that the great cities were lighted by night . . . *ubi* (at Antioch) *per nocturnum luminum claritudo diurnum solet imitari fulgorem.*

³ *Ne quod colitur et odoratur in parietibus depingatur* (Council of Elvira, Canon 33). Eusebius (*Letter to Constantia*) blames as profane the desire to have a figure of Christ (*op. Migne*, ii. 1,545. Cf. *id.*, *Hist. eccl.* vii. 18). Macarius Magnus objects to painted representations of angels (Tillemont, iv. 309). This fear of recalling paganism will die away as paganism itself disappears, and the churches will be covered with paintings which will make

great, silent, severe Christ of the Byzantine churches does not yet appear: neither are there sumptuous garments for the priests, nor harmonious, solemn singing,¹ nor even incense,—a pagan offering that the true God refuses: this religion of death has not yet begun to love the splendors of life. But upon the walls, upon the lamps, perhaps even upon the vases of the altar, pious inscriptions, and at the entrance of the sanctuary a promise of peace,—*Pax intranti*; as on the threshold of certain temples of Aesculapius, who was represented as a healer of maladies of the soul also, the worshipper read these words: “Enter good, go out better.”² At the altar the rites are simple and pure; instead of bloodshed and a moaning victim and the coarsely abundant repast set out near the pagan temple, the God who has made the harvests and the vine gives himself under the form of wine and bread, and all believers, in token of brotherhood, eat of the same bread and drink from the same cup. As the preparation for these holy mysteries, there was the dogmatic and moral instruction of the Scriptures, the tragic story of the Passion, and the beautiful parables of the Gospels; then followed the silent prayer of the believers, the *Sursum corda* of the celebrant, which should be humanity’s perpetual cry, and the faith of the whole assembly finding expression in the rhythmic recitation of the psalms,³—that lyric poetry of the Hebrews, the most beautiful that the world has ever known.

their walls like a religious volume open before the eyes of the devout. The symbolism of the catacombs, with its vague impersonal figures, will give place to a fruitful realism; that is to say, to fixed types which the most ignorant man can recognize. The transition from one system to the other is well indicated by the description of his church which Paulinus of Nola sends to his friend Sulpicius Severus. (See Müntz, *La Peinture et l’iconographie chrétienne*.) Sculpture also does not appear upon Christian sarcophagi until the fourth century. The Chevalier de Rossi has gathered in the Museum of the Lateran a very curious collection of these, and M. Le Blant has described and explained those of the city of Arles.

¹ It was Saint Ambrose who, near the close of the fourth century, organized sacred singing; but it had early become the practice in the churches of the East, for the purpose of sustaining the attention of the congregation, whom silent prayer could not occupy for a long time, to divide the worshippers into two groups, who chanted the psalms responsively (Saint Basil, *Letters*, Nos. 63 and 64). The psalms were sung, he says (*Homily upon the First Psalm*), to the end that the sweetness of the harmony might gently insinuate the precepts into men’s hearts.

² *Bonus intra, melior exi* (C. I. L. vol. viii. No. 2,584; and for the Christian formula, *ibid.*, No. 9,712).

³ *Primitiva Ecclesia ita psallebat, ut vox pronuncianti vicinior esset quam carenti* (Isidore of Seville, *De eccles. offic.* 1, 5). The younger Pliny (*Epist. x. 94*) shows that this usage was very ancient: . . . *Carmen Christo . . . dicere secum invicem*. Music and singing also made part of the religious ceremonies of the Jews and pagans. Ancient Egypt had among its clergy



BYZANTINE CHRIST (MOAIC FROM THE CHAPEL OF MARTORANA AT PALERMO)

What attractions were these for refined and delicate souls, or even for those sinful women who would gladly, like her of Scripture, have washed the Saviour's feet with their tears! Many thoroughly accepted the Christian doctrine, and derived from it those rules of conduct which are the condition of salvation; they lived in the shadow, in silence and meditation, and history knows not their names: such were the true flock of the Good Shepherd. But many also, not having the

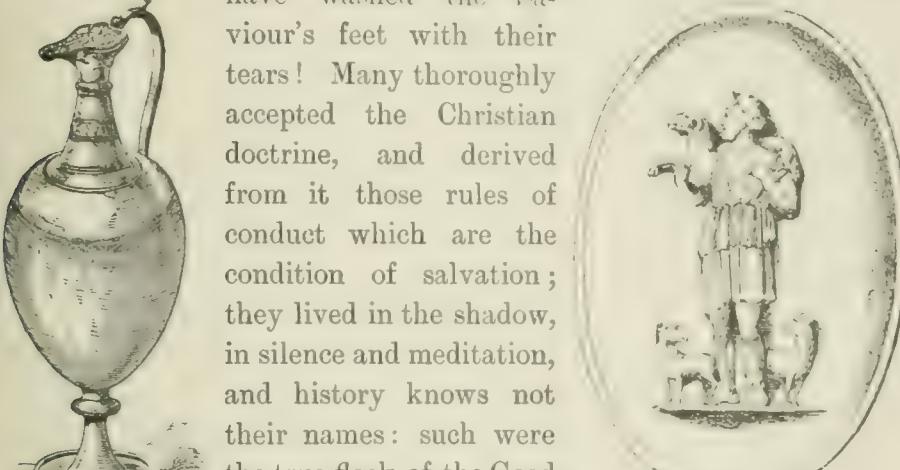
strength to submit their character to their belief, will content themselves with taking the exterior forms of the faith, and let passion still remain supreme in their souls, while with their lips they murmur the new prayers. Such were the politic and worldly Christians whom we shall now meet at every

step in this history. In the case of still others the faith took a character of aggressiveness; and these will stir up religious quarrels and let loose upon the Empire a new form of domestic strife.

priestesses who were singers (Revillout, *Rec. d'Egypte*, 1881, p. 100), and in Alexandria there was a great school, where choristers and musicians were trained for the solemnities of worship. See Miller, *Dicr. de Canap.*, lines 58, 59; Julian, in a letter which will be quoted later; and Amm. Marcellinus, xxii. 16.

¹ Silver vase of the fourth century, bearing a Christian inscription. (*Cabinet de France*, No. 3,884.) This vase is about 14 inches high and 17 in circumference.

² Intaglio in the *Cabinet de France* (onyx 10 millim. by 07; No. 2,166 of the Catalogue).

SILVER VASE.¹THE GOOD SHEPHERD.²

II.—THE DONATISTS.

THE Church of Africa was already disturbed by the Donatists,—ardent sectaries and great disputers, hard of heart and violent in disposition, as that land of fire has always brought forth. This was the most rigid of the sects which, under the names of Montanists, Novatians, Meletians, etc., protested against the relaxation of discipline and a too facile indulgence towards sinners. They rejected from their communion the *traditores*, who in times of persecution had given up the Holy Scriptures to the pagan officials, and the *lapsi*, who had denied the faith. Their fierce pride would not admit that the Church could rightly pardon those who had shown weakness in times of danger. Under pretext that the deacon Caecilianus, raised by the people of Carthage to the see of that city, had been ordained by a *traditor*, seventy Numidian bishops consecrated in his stead the deacon Majorinus, and after him, in 313, Donatus. Carthage and many Numidian cities had at that time two bishops. This schism gave rise to acts of violence. An offer of conference being made by Caecilianus, one of the seventy replied: “Let him come, and instead of laying upon him hands of consecration, we will break his head as a penance.”¹ These men, who yesterday were themselves persecuted, began an interminable war among themselves. They were scarcely less bold towards the authorities of the state. Hearing that the governor was about to set on foot an investigation into their conduct: “What is there in common,” they said, “between Christians and kings, between bishops and the court?”

However, neither party was as yet strong enough itself to settle the case, and each applied to Constantine to give them as judges the bishops of Gaul, among whom *traditores* had never been known. The Emperor was extremely averse to deviations from the established order; it was his wish that there should be throughout the

¹ *Exeat hic . . . et quassetur illi caput de poenitentia* (Optatus Milevitanus, pp. 20–21, edit. of 1679). This Optatus, bishop of Milevi, one of the four cities of the Cirtensian Confederation, wrote, according to Saint Jerome, his treatise *De Schismate Donatistarum* before the year 375.

Empire but one religion, the worship of the supreme God, as there was but one human will, his own. These clamors, which threw a whole province into confusion on account of the election of a bishop, angered him; he resolved to put an end to them, without, however, causing the public authorities to interpose in the affair. Imitating the wise conduct of Aurelian in the case of Paul of Samosata,¹ he laid the matter before a commission of Italian and Gallic bishops, whom he constituted judges by a letter, in which he said: "The bishops are at variance, the people are separated into two factions and driven to extremes. It has pleased me to command Caecilianus, with ten of his partisans and ten of his adversaries, to come to Rome. I have moreover ordered Reticius, Maternus, and Marinus, your colleagues, to present themselves also, that the cause may be heard." Three Gallic and fifteen Italian bishops formed a tribunal; they reversed the action of the seventy, justified Caecilianus, and sent their decision, with all the documents in the case, to the Emperor, who maintained Caecilianus in his see.²

The Donatists, however, refused to accept the decision of the council, and incriminated another person, the Bishop of Aphouga. As it was in this case a question, not of doctrine, but of fact,—namely, whether the bishop had been a *traditor* and whether Caecilianus was the author of a certain letter,—the Emperor sent them before the proconsul of Africa, who treated them all, as ordinary persons amenable to his jurisdiction, with the haughty coldness of the Roman magistrate.³ The Donatists were again the losing party.

¹ Page 301.

² Euseb., *Hist. eccl.* x. 5. Cf. Optatus Milevitanus, *De Schismate Donatist.* i. 28, and *Gesta purgationis Caecil.* The Donatists had asked to have their judges selected from among the Gallic bishops. Constantine, in part deferring to this desire, designated three from Gaul, but added to them bishops from Italy and Rhaetia under the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome. We have the letter addressed by Constantine to the Roman bishop *M. Tertullus, episcopus Romae et Marci;* similar letters were doubtless despatched to all the bishops convoked for this first Roman council. The Fathers sat in the palace of the Lateran,—an imperial domain which Constantine gave to the Bishop of Rome probably after the death of Fausta, who occupied it when she came to the city. Cf. Tillemont, iv. 141. We have seen (p. 31) that towards the close of the second century a primacy of honor had already been recognized in the Bishop of Rome; Amm. Marcellinus (xv. 5) says, in the fourth, that the bishops of the Eternal City enjoyed greater consideration . . . *Potiores auctoritas Urbis episcopi;* although he also says that Constantius II. caused Pope Liberius to be arrested *angustia operatoris jussis et plurimorum sui consortium decretis obstens.*

³ Optatus Milevitanus, *Gesta purgationis*, pp. 97, 98. Neither in the *Acta* of the proconsul of Africa nor in the laws and authentic letters of Constantine do we find the pro-

But they were numerous and tenacious; they petitioned the Emperor with such vehemence to obtain new judges that he convoked a second assembly of bishops in the city of Arles, authorizing persons thus summoned to employ the imperial post for their journey.¹ This was giving them the character of public functionaries; and in his eyes they became so, for he proposed by means of them to rule their turbulent communities.

The Council of Arles (314), where, according to some authorities, thirty-three bishops² were assembled, according to others a much greater number, condemned the Donatists and prepared twenty-two canons, of which only three concern political history.

Mixed marriages have always, and justly, been displeasing to the Church, since they imperil the faith of believers. But at this time, the Christians being a minority, and an ardent minority, these unions became a means of extending the gospel. The Council regarded them very mercifully; it condemned to but a brief penitence the Christian maiden who had married a pagan (tenth canon),—evidently hoping that she would attract her husband into the Church. This was, moreover, Saint Paul's teaching.³

We know how Tertullian and Origen regarded the military life, and we have seen that the last persecution began upon the refusal of the Christians to enter the service or to remain in it. But from the moment when the Church obtained an equality with paganism, she naturally desired that all offices, and especially military ones, should be open to them. By a skilful change of front the Council of Arles, renouncing the early teaching, decided that those who abandoned the standards should be excommunicated from the Church (third canon).

affectations which Eusebius and the ecclesiastical historians attribute to this Emperor when he speaks to the bishops.

¹ The right of using the *cursus publicus* involved also that of being lodged and fed in the *mansiones* at the expense of the state,—or rather of those provincials upon whom the burden fell. To each group of two bishops Constantine granted (*Letter to the Bishop of Syracuse*) three public slaves to serve them. These favors, which were continued by Constantius, Amm. Marcellinus considers ruinous to the imperial post and the public treasury (xxi. 16, *ad ann. 361*).

² Many of the bishops sent priests or deacons as their representatives.

³ The Apostle indeed counselled the Christian husband or wife in no case to abandon his or her pagan companion if the latter were content to dwell in the marriage state (1 Cor. vii. 10-16); but a letter of Saint Ambrose shows that towards the close of the century the Church felt herself strong enough to have no further need of compromises.

The members of each Christian community were subject to the spiritual jurisdiction of the bishop; the Church aspired to follow them into the public functions they were called to fill, however high the station might be. "A Christian appointed governor," says the seventh canon, "will take letters of recommendation to the bishop of the country which is intrusted to his care, and the bishop will watch over him, assist him with his advice, and, if he should violate Christian discipline, may exclude him from the Church." These men, yesterday proscribed, already looked forward to a conquest of the army and the government. What confidence, what audacity was this! With it also what a marvellous spirit of government they possessed, and how evident it is that the world cannot resist them!

Constantine brought the council to an end by ordering the bishops to return to their episcopal cities.¹ The Benedictines say: "It is noteworthy that at the close of this council the bishops did not sign in the order of the rank of their sees, but according to their seniority. . . . There was, therefore, nothing determined in Gaul touching the pre-eminence of certain sees; all the bishops were regarded as equal, age alone making a difference among them."²

It was usual for the assemblies to communicate to absent bishops the decisions which had been made, so that uniformity of teaching might be secured. Before separating, the council sent its canons to the Pope, "who could," says the oecumenical letter, "more readily cause them to be accepted by all."³ Rome, the sole apostolic see of the West, was accord-

CONSTANTINE.⁴

¹ *Proficiscemini et redite ad proprias sedes* (Letter of Constantine to the Council of Arles).
- *Taedians, jussit omnes ad suas sedes redire* (Letter of the Council to Pope Sylvester).

² *Art de vérifier les dates*, ii. 267.

³ Constantine wearing the casque, with the monogram. (*Cabinet de France*, Collection of the Duc de Luynes.) Intaglio, 12 millim. by 10 (much enlarged in our representation), which probably served for a seal to some religious dignitary. It is plainly not of the time of Constantine, and seems to be the work of an artist of the Renaissance. Cf. *Revue numism.*, 1866, pp. 78-110.

⁴ *Per te potissimum omnibus insinuari*. See the twenty-two canons of the Council of Arles in Routh, *Reliquiae sacrae*, iv. 307. The Bishop of Arles was the first to sign the letter, which gives reason to believe that he presided at the council. The Fathers at Arles

ingly its religious metropolis. By their deference, the Fathers confirmed the primacy of honor long accorded to the Roman bishop in the Latin provinces; but this was not an acknowledgment of primacy of jurisdiction.

The Donatists were no more submissive to the Council of Arles than they had been to that of Rome. Again they appealed to the Emperor. Vexed by these quarrels, which seemed to him futile, he exclaimed sadly: *O rabida furoris audacia!*¹ But he had put his hand upon the affairs of the Church, and could not withdraw it. He sided now with the orthodox, now with their adversaries, imprisoning some, banishing others; and at last, tired of the dispute, sent the bishops home to their churches.²

III.—THE COUNCIL OF NICAEA (325).

IN proclaiming liberty of worship, the edict of Milan had placed the government outside of and above the religious quarrels of the time,—an excellent attitude, which Constantine had not been able to maintain. The interests of public peace soon forced him to return to the old Roman doctrine of religion under the control of the state. But it was no longer a question of those cults without dogmas or teaching, without mutual ties, without authority outside the cities where they were established, and all having for their head the master of the Empire, the priest-monarch. The Christian Church was an immense body, having her discipline and her hierarchy. With her doctrine of divine inspiration, believed to be always active, she drew her rules of conduct from a higher sphere than that of the civil law: and hence acknowledged the latter only so far as she was forced to do so, or as she could bend it to her own interests. Graeco-Latin antiquity had never known a power like this, and long

address the Pope as *Frater dilectissime*, and they clearly mark the character of the Roman see when they say to him: "Thou couldst not be absent *a partibus illis in quibus et Apostoli quotidiane sedent et crux ipsorum sine intermissione Dei gloriam testatur*" (*Optatus Milevitanus, Gesta purgat.*, p. 99).

¹ *Optatus Milev., De Schism. Donatist.* p. 28.

² Imprisonment of Caecilianus at Brixia, then his re-establishment in the see of Carthage in November, 316; exile of the Donatists about this time; their recall in 220. Cf. Routh, *Reliquiae sacrae*, iv. 307.

to control it was a thing impossible for the public authority. But the belief of the intervention of the Holy Spirit caused in this great body continual perturbations. The Church had already had innumerable sects, who pursued each other with anathemas, and was destined to have many more. In proposing to establish unity and peace in the midst of this violent and irascible world, where each party always believed itself the sole possessor of the truth, Constantine undertook a formidable task. All his reign was destined to be disturbed by it; and his successors suffered like himself until the time when the Christian clergy succeeded in withdrawing religious questions from the decision of the civil power, and after having rejoiced to welcome the entrance of the Church into the State, became strong enough to attempt to place the State within the Church. Was it possible for Constantine to act otherwise than as he did? The honest and quiet deism which was the whole of his religion, did not suffice for those fiery souls. We shall see that he was compelled to give the Church her most formidable weapon when he called together the first of those œcumeneical councils which later turned against his successors.

After the defeat of Licinius had made Constantine master of Asia, he promulgated two edicts: one, to annul all the effects of the late persecution; the other, a truly episcopal letter, full of gentleness and unction, exhorting all nations to adore the Supreme God, "who, showing through his Son his own resplendent face, has bidden the world to worship his divinity." This letter, which is a profession of the Christian faith, has in it nothing of the imperious and hasty style of Constantine. It was evidently written by a bishop, and this bishop must have been he whom, since the edict of Milan, the Emperor had employed as secretary for ecclesiastical affairs, Hosius of Cordova.¹ But Constantine appears through it, with the advice many times repeated, that all live in peace, and cherish a spirit of mutual toleration.²

Alas! toleration was in the policy of the Emperor: it was not, and it could not be, in the conduct of men who believed themselves masters of the future of humanity, dispensing the salvation

¹ See p. 497. To him is addressed the ordinance concerning *marimissionibus in ecclisia* (*Codex Thessal.* iv. 7, anno 321).

² Euseb., *Life of Const.* 48–60, especially sect. 56.

or the eternal destruction of men's souls. At the moment when Constantine was publishing his pacific rescript of 324, the most violent of all the quarrels which ever agitated the Church broke out in Alexandria, and spread through all the East.

There had been in Egypt revolts against discipline. Meletius, bishop of Lycopolis, a partisan of rigid doctrines, had refused to submit to his metropolitan, Alexander, and Colluthus strove to defend the ancient rights of the presbyters, or elders, against the encroachments of episcopal authority. Far greater in importance was the question raised by Arius, an Alexandrian priest renowned for his learning, for the austerity of his life, and for his powerful logic. "If the Son," he said, "is begotten of the Father, as the Church teaches, the Father existed before the Son, and these two Persons of the Trinity are not equal." The reasoning was accurate; but to bring reason into the mysteries of religion is to destroy them.¹ Arius maintained indeed the God of the mind whom philosophers place alone upon the throne of the universe; but he abandoned the God of the heart, him whom the imagination delighted to behold walking over the plains of Galilee and on the banks of the Jordan surrounded by children and by holy women, in the glorious Transfiguration upon Mount Tabor and upon the blood-stained cross, and then breaking the stone from his sepulchre, —a token of the universal resurrection which he had promised. To make a religion, this was the God to be taught. The men of administrative ability in the Church, who have been in large numbers side by side with the men of faith, made no mistake at this point; they knew that all Christianity centres in the Christ, that his divinity was the great and novel feature of the teaching, and that if it were abandoned, the entire edifice would give way. Now, to represent Jesus as only the first of created beings, and not eternally existent, would be opening the door to those who saw in him a mere man, as Carpocrates, the Ebionites, and Paul of Samosata had already taught. There was another consequence even more dangerous: this would give satisfaction to many pagans or converts whom the idea of the Trinity disturbed,

¹ In respect to the antecedents of Arianism, which had deep roots in the human mind, and even in the Christian faith, see the *Pastor of Hermas*, the pseudo-Clementines, and in this volume pp. 10 (note 3) and 38. The doctrine recurs again with the Nominalists of the Middle Ages, and exists at the present day.

and who in Arianism recovered their one God, him whom the Emperor himself worshipped. Orthodox believers were therefore extremely troubled by the re-appearance of this tenacious heresy, which under the veil of theological phraseology was an offensive return of conquered rationalism against triumphant Christianity. Alexander excommunicated Arius; and a hundred Libyan and African bishops united in council ratified the sentence of their metropolitan, and with the heresiarch they also condemned eleven deacons and two bishops, his adherents (321).¹

But Arius had many other adherents, for he had illustrious predecessors: Plato and Aristotle,—that is to say, almost all Greek philosophy,—Philo the great Alexandrian Jew, and the Neo-Platonists, who had represented the Divine Being as divided, from a repugnance to make the world proceed directly from God, the multi-form from unity, the imperfect from perfection, movement from the immovable. This famous ancestry explains the long popularity of Arianism in the Oriental provinces, where Hellenic subtlety took delight in these insoluble questions, and the indifference on this subject of the Western provinces, where the human mind, less disposed to meditation, as yet cared not to wander in the darkness of metaphysics. “Among pagans,” was the observation of the Greek Themistius, “there are more than three hundred opinions concerning the divinity; it is not, therefore, wonderful if Christians do not agree upon this subject.”² Vainly Alexander repeated to his opponents: “Abide by the gospels. The blessed Saint John says that the Word is above human knowledge, even above the knowledge of the angels. Inquire no further on this subject, and do not try to understand that which is above human comprehension.”³ “Concerning the mysteries of faith,” says another, “inquire neither how nor why.”⁴ Words of wisdom are these, to which our insatiable curiosity will never listen. The infinite attracts us, and we always desire to measure its impenetrable depths. This fruitless endeavor is at once the honor and the despair of the human soul.

¹ Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* i. 6.

² Themistius, *apud* Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* iv. 32. Philo said a true thing when he maintained that we could know of God only what he is not (Vacherot, *Hist. des idées d'Alexandrie*, i. 405).

³ Letter of Alexander to the Bishop of Byzantium, *apud* Theodoret, *Hist. eccl.* i. 3: χαλεπότερά σον μὴ ζῆτε καὶ ἴψηλοτερά σον μὴ ἔξεταζε.

⁴ Gelasius of Cyzicus. *Πρακτικον τῆς πανωτης σινοῦσι*, ii. 29.

Arius had taken shelter with Eusebius of Nicomedeia (322). Some bishops supported him; to one council another was opposed. The Arians were again allowed to perform the rites of religion, which was equivalent to annulling the sentence of the Egyptian bishops; and Alexander was advised again to receive into his church those whom he had expelled. The Church was divided on the question; there were everywhere discussions concerning the Father and the Son,—even in the shops and public places; and the pagans represented the Trinity upon the stage, in order to turn the subject into ridicule.¹

This tumult at last came to the ears of Constantine, and displeased him. He wrote to the two adversaries thus: “I understand that you, Alexander, asked the priests concerning the interpretation of a certain place in Scripture, and stirred up many vain and curious questions to know their opinion therein; and that you, Arius, said inconsiderately and rashly things that you should have concealed; whence discord arose between you, and the people, being disturbed by your factions, did fall away and forsook the Universal Church. . . . Questions like these which no law prescribes, the idle cobwebs of contention spun by curious wits, are propounded to try the strength of reason and the sharpness of understanding; yet they ought to be suppressed, not to distract the common people, or make them more factious. . . . Is it becoming that brethren should strive with brethren in a vain and idle contention about words, to the disturbance of the universal peace? . . . Seeing that your contentions arise from points not concerning the main structure of religion, and of small moment, they should breed no disagreement in your affections. . . . Agree, therefore, and let there be harmony between you, that the people may live in peace and unity, and that I may spend my days quietly and enjoy the happiness of a tranquil reign.”² Constantine, who treated so lightly the great problem of Christianity, had nothing of the theologian in his character, but everything of the ruler; his religion was the public peace,

¹ Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* i. 6, and, for a later period, many passages of Gregory Nazianzen. Arius, to spread his ideas, composed verses upon well-known airs, “which were sung by travellers, millers, and artisans” (Philostorgius, ii. 2). Later, Gregory and Ephraem employed the same methods of religious instruction. The Psalms also were sung, and certain hymns of Gregory were even received, in the East, among the canticles of the Church.

² Eusebius, *Life of Const.* ii. 69, and Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* i. 7.

and his God a deity whom it seemed to him that every man might accept.

Hosius, his secretary, carried this letter to Alexandria, and vainly strove to restore tranquillity. Egypt was in a blaze; the bishops accused each other of heresy, and the congregations took sides with their pastors.¹ Then Constantine conceived a great political idea. He resolved to call together the bishops of all Christendom and have them prepare a *Credo*, which, after discussion and approbation by the majority, should become a law of the Empire. Then he himself would undertake to have this law respected by all the nations subject to his sway, and by all recalcitrant doctors and bishops of the Church.²

When Constantine said to the bishops: "Come to an agreement in the matter of your faith, and submit yourselves to the decision of your majority," the measure was one of supreme good sense; but when he added that he would have their decision executed, he went counter to his edict of Milan, which he ought far rather to have observed. To this statesman the toleration of 313 had been an administrative measure; the intolerance of 325 was another. He proposed to employ the council and its *Credo* as tools of government, to use the expression of Tacitus.

More than two hundred and fifty bishops,³ belonging to the

¹ It is difficult to admit as genuine the long and singular letter that Constantine is said to have addressed to Arius. (See Baronius, *Ann. eccl.* 318, or Labbe, *Conec. græc.* ii. 270.) That later writers speak of this letter, or quote portions of it, is no proof of authenticity, for even the contemporaries of Constantine misrepresent his edicts and attribute to him speeches which he never made. The very judicious Roman Catholic author Lebeau (*Hist. du Bas-Empire*, i. 244) cannot persuade himself to accept it. It is proper to say, however, that the letters of Constantine quoted by Athanasius in his *Apo'logia* are equally verbose, and that the imperial secretaries of this period made their masters speak with but little dignity, — as preachers, and not as monarchs.

² The proconsul Gellius had called upon the philosophers of Athens to come to an agreement on the question of the Supreme Good, and had said to them that if they would only interest themselves in doing this, the question would be quickly settled. Gellius and Constantine are good representatives of that administrative spirit, hostile to subtle abstractions, and in every way wishing for exact statements, in order to know what conduct would be suitable in the case, and upon what opinion it would be proper to decide. (See Hayet, *L'Christianisme*, ii. 70.)

³ Eusebius, *Life of Const.* ii. 8. Athanasius (*Against Arius*) says three hundred and eighteen bishops,—doubtless for the reason that this was the number of servants assigned in Scripture to Abraham. The second ecumenical council, that of Constantinople in 381, has the same number. Each bishop brought with him several priests and deacons. The imperial port had been put at the service of the fathers, and Constantine supplied them with provis-

provinces which were to form the Eastern Empire, responded to the call; one even came from Persia, and another from the country of the Goths,—a proof that Christianity had long before this crossed the frontiers of the Empire.¹ The Bishop of Rome, or, as Socrates calls him, “the Bishop of the Imperial City,” sent two priests to represent him. It was possible, therefore, without being too ambitious, to call this gathering the oecumenical council, or assembly of bishops from all the habitable earth. Hosius, the Emperor’s confidential secretary, appears to have had charge of the discussions,² in which the priest Athanasius, the great adversary of Arius, took the most

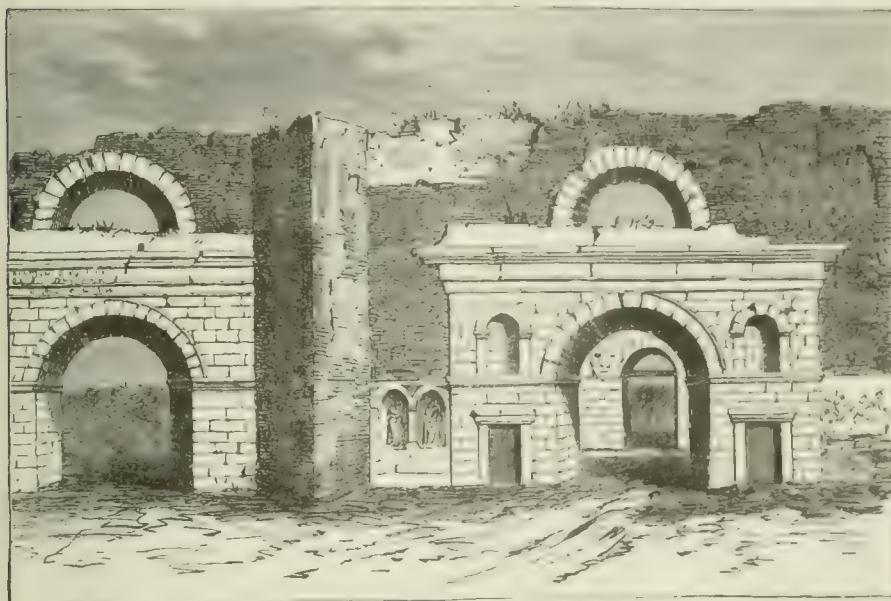
sions. Socrates, Theodoret, and Sozomenus assert that the bishops, disagreeing among themselves, sent to Constantine a quantity of documents, which he, in the interests of peace, threw into the fire.

¹ See p. 244, note 2. Philostorgius, however, calls Ulfila the first bishop of the Goths; it is possible, therefore, that he who is mentioned in the text was some person in holy orders who had been sent to evangelize the Goths established in the Empire, and for this function elevated to the rank of bishop.

² The delegation of authority by the Bishop of Rome to Hosius is an hypothesis which nothing confirms. Eusebius (*Life of Const.* iii. 7) says only: “The Bishop of the Imperial City did not attend, on account of his advanced age, but certain of his priests represented him ($\piρεσβύτεροι δὲ αὐτοῦ παρόντες τὴν αὐτοῦ τάξιν ἐπλήρωντες$).” It is entirely comprehensible, on the other hand, that the Emperor should have given the charge of a discussion, so important in a political point of view, to a man who had long enjoyed his confidence. It was Hosius who signed first when the bishops attached their names to the creed. As to the objection that Hosius, only a Bishop of Cordova, would not have taken precedence over those of Antioch and Alexandria, it has been forgotten that this council was, to the Emperor, much more a matter of State than of the Church. Anxious to put an end to the disputes which disturbed his provinces, he cared but little whether Arius were justified, or Alexander; the object for which he did care was to have the majority reach a conclusion which he could then employ to silence the opponents, whichever party it might be. He therefore needed to influence in this assembly, either personally or by some one upon whom he could rely; and this he did. Theodosius, later, did the same in the case of the second oecumenical council,—that of Constantinople in 381, where was present neither Roman legate nor any one bishop from the West. Eusebius says (*Life of Constantine*, iii. 13) that the Emperor, after his address, gave the presidents of the council opportunity to speak ($τοῖς τῆς συνέδριον προεδροῖς$). By this must be understood those who later were called “patriarchs,” or “primates.” In this matter of Arianism, which decided the fate of Christendom, the Bishop of Rome played no part whatever. The letter sent by Hosius to the Western bishops to communicate to them the decisions of the council was addressed *sanctis Dei ecclesiis quae Romae sunt et in Italia et Hispania tota et in reliquis ultioribus nationibus usque ad Oceanum communorantibus* (Labbe, *Cone. gén.* ii. 267). Theologians early became aware of the importance of introducing unity into the Church, and consequently of connecting the episcopal sees with the Roman see (pp. 30–31); but the Emperors were much less concerned in this regard. The founder of Constantinople and the Emperors who succeeded him in that city had no wish to give the clergy of the Oriental provinces an Italian head. In the famous edict of Theodosius for the suppression of paganism, the bishops of Rome and Alexandria are again placed in the same rank (*Codex Theod.* xvi. 1, 2, *anno* 380). The younger Theodosius seems to make no difference between the patriarchs of Rome and of Constantinople; “for the two cities ought to have the same rights” . . . *Constantinopolis quae Romae veteris prerogativa lactatur* (*ibid.* 2, 45, *anno* 421).

active part.¹ By order of the Emperor the council held its sessions in the Basilica of Nicaea,—a vast edifice usually employed, as in all the Graeco-Roman cities, for purposes of traffic and law.

A great cause, indeed, was about to be pleaded in this basilica,—that of the religious future of the world. In our days we wonder



GATES OF NICAEA, FROM PEYSSONNEL.²

at the audacity of men who dare to say to God what he is and what he is not, forgetting that they may hear the Jehovah bursting forth above their heads to ask of them, as he did the patriarch Job: “Where wast thou . . . when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? . . . Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; and caused the day-

¹ Athanasius, born at Alexandria about 296, was at this time twenty-nine years of age. It should be observed that this great defender of the dogma of a God one in essence though not one in person, was of a country where this belief held an important part in the national religion; in reality, however, the Egyptian triad was very different from the Christian trinity. In 326 Alexander was succeeded by Theonas, who occupied the episcopal throne but three months, to which Athanasius was then raised by an orthodox minority. A Roman Catholic author, in a learned book on the great bishop, recognizes the fact that in this election “the canons were violated” (*Fialon, Saint Athanase*, p. 110).

² These gates, constructed from the debris of ancient edifices, have inscriptions arranged without order, which marks them as belonging to the mediæval period. The MS. of the *Voyage de Peyssonnel à Nicée* is in the Library of the Institute (Paris).

spring to know his place? . . . Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea? or hast thou walked in the search of the depth?"

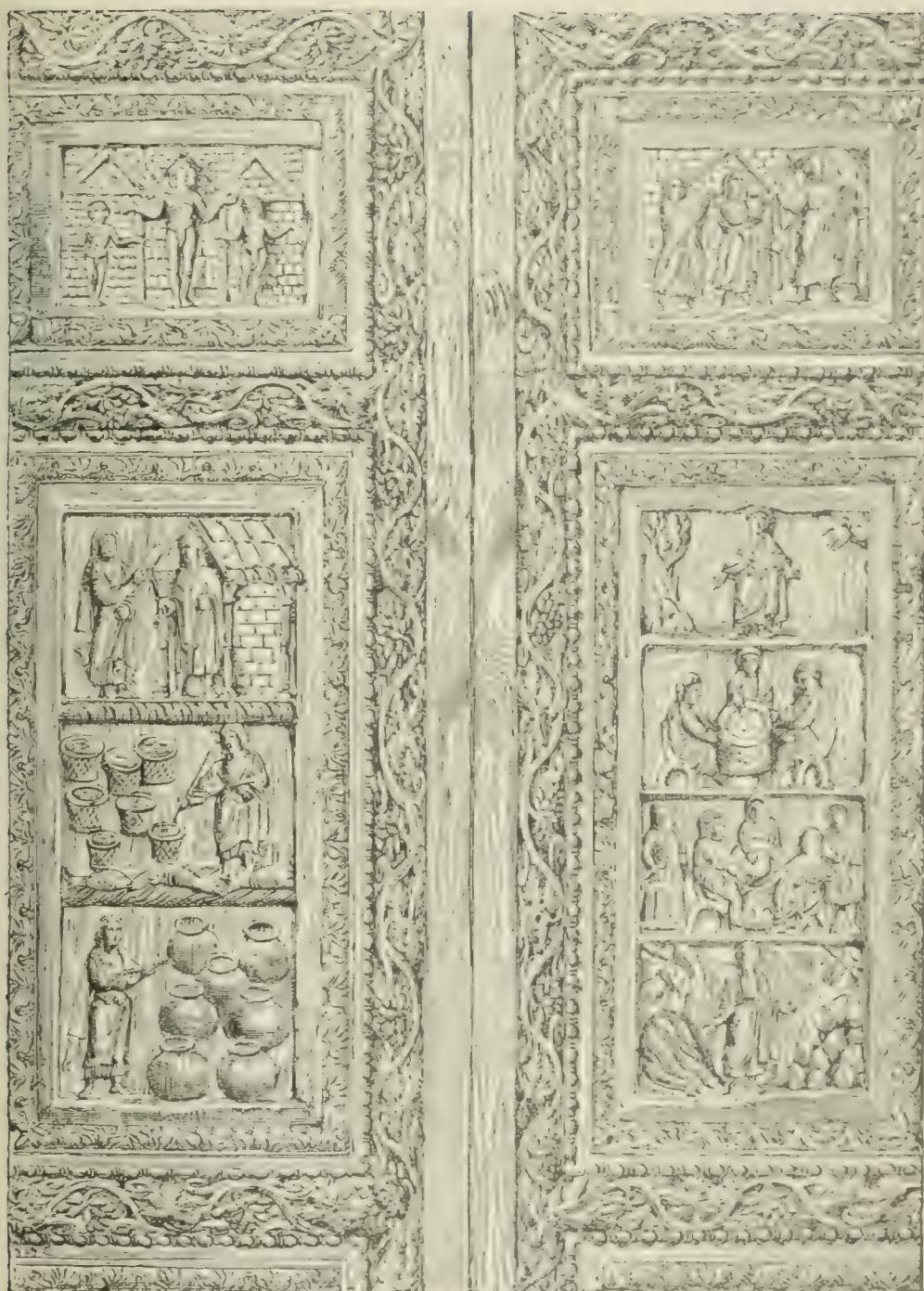
But in that time no man wondered at this rashness, for philosophers and theologians alike claimed to measure the infinite and



CHRIST ON THE CROSS.¹

see the invisible. The nations listened to them eagerly, and believed with those who from the open heaven represented a God of flesh and blood descending to the earth and giving his flesh to be

¹ From a Syriac MS. of 586 (Laurentian Library at Florence). The engraving on the next page represents the upper part of the carved wooden door of the Church of Santa Sabina upon the Aventine at Rome. In one of the sections is the earliest-known representation of the Crucifixion. The Christians of the earliest centuries had a great repugnance to delineating scenes of martyrdom. At a considerably later period history prevailed over symbolism, and the scenes of the New Testament were represented, for example at Santa Sabina (fifth century), in the mosaics of Sant' Apollinare Nuovo at Ravenna (sixth century), and in the frescos of Pope Formoso (891-896). The once celebrated mosaic of the oratory of John VII. (705-707), which represented the crucifixion of Saint Peter, is now lost. To show the details on the door of Santa Sabina we give only the upper panels. On the left, at the top, is represented the Crucifixion; then follow in order: the Holy Women at the Tomb; the Healing of a Sick Man at the Gate of the Temple; the Miracle of the Loaves; the Water changed to Wine; Moses receiving the Tables of the Law (?); the Supper at Emmaus; the Visit of the Angels to Abraham; Moses striking the Rock.



FRAGMENT OF A DOOR OF CARVED WOOD (FROM THE CHURCH OF SANTA SABINA AI ROMI).

bruised and his blood to flow. The divine hypostases of the Neo-Platonists left them indifferent and cold; while the Christ, suffering, scourged, and dying on the cross to save them, was present to their eyes, with pierced hands and wounded side and head bowed in the agony of death. In the last beating of his heart they felt that vast love of the human race which their gods of marble and bronze had never known, and they could not reduce to common prose the splendid poem of the Passion. They did not say: If Jesus is only a man, his death is sublime; if he is God, it is but an illusion, a sleep of brief duration.¹ Christ, the conqueror of death, lifting mankind, with the hope of eternal compensation, far above the miseries of the present life, was the triumphant vision which set them free from their greatest dread.—the horror of destruction. This was the God to whom men now turned eagerly; and when their faith was attacked by metaphysical arguments, it became the business of metaphysics to defend it. The Emperor had no liking for such discussions, but they gratified the popular taste, and he was obliged to endure them.

The Fathers began to arrive about the middle of June, 325. Constantine had summoned Arius to be present;² and it is said that the philosophers also gathered eagerly at this great assize of philosophy and religion, with their belief in the Logos, holding the place of the Word, and in the Demiurges of the Timeos, seeming to correspond to the Son of God, the Executor of the Divine Will. Bishops and philosophers joined in argument; but we have the history of these debates only from Christian authors, and they naturally ended with the defeat of the pagans, sometimes by aid of the argument which was perfectly legitimate in this case, and had been used by Tertullian: "Faith needs no demonstration."³ It would, in fact, be nothing but reason if it asked for reasons.

Jesus had taught thus: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be

¹ The Manichaeans and the Marcionites maintained that the Passion was only an appearance (Saint Epiphanes, *Herm.* Ixix, 51 and 61). At that period it was believed that this world was the centre of the universe, which seemed to have been made expressly for man, king of all nature. No one then thought of the sidereal humanity which doubtless peoples infinitude, or asked whether the Redemption concerned it also.

² *Erecabatur frequenter Arius in concilium* (Rufin., *Hist. eccl.* i. 5).

³ Sozomenus, *Hist. eccl.* i. 18.

comforted. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. . . . Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time. Thou shalt not kill: . . . but I say unto you, that every one who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment. . . . If, therefore, thou art offering thy gift at the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. . . . Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, that every one that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. . . . Ye have heard that it was said. An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you . . . Whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man would go to law with thee, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. . . . Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy: but I say unto you, Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you. . . . For if ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? Judge not, that ye be not judged. . . . Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? . . . All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets. . . . Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them: else ye have no reward with your Father which is in heaven. When therefore thou doest alms, sound not a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets. . . . Verily I say unto you. They have received their reward. . . . And when ye pray, ye shall not be as the hypocrites: for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. . . . But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret. . . . And in praying use not vain repetitions, as the Gentiles do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking . . . for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be

done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

Simple and beautiful words are these, which conquered men's souls because they touch the heart. To make a church, a discipline, something very different was needed,—a dogma, mystery, and the supernatural. At this task the apostles and theologians had labored for nearly three centuries; but the Christian Church had not yet a constitution expressed in brief terms and accepted by all the bishops. This the Council of Nicaea was now about to give her.

The assembly began its labors on the 5th or 6th of July, in the presence of Constantine. Hosius, who sat at his right hand, opened the session by some words of gratitude to the Emperor. Constantine then announced to the bishops that he had called them together to re-establish harmony in the Church. In doing this they would please God, he said, and would do a great service to himself, their brother in the worship of God.¹

It is not within the province of this history to relate in detail the debates which took place in the assembly,—the passionate excitement of the orthodox believers, the wily reticence of the Eusebians, as the secret partisans of Arius were called, and their efforts to prevent an official condemnation; withal, the embarrassment of the Emperor in the midst of these subtleties which the old soldier either did not comprehend, or despised when he was able to perceive their meaning.² It will suffice us to recall the argument of Arius, and the response of the council contained in its

¹ Eusebius, *Life of Const.* iii. 11–12. The historian does not name the bishop who sat at the Emperor's right,—perhaps to leave his hearers to infer that it was himself. The probability is that the bishop was Hosius, who signed first the Canons and the *Catechism*. See on this subject p. 497, n. 2. In Theodoret (ii. 15) Athanasius says: "Was there a council in which Hosius did not preside, that most illustrious bishop of the time?" Constantine spoke in Latin, the official language, which continued until 397 to be the language used in courts throughout the Empire (*Codex Just.* vii. 45, 12). *Deserat a prout ducit ut ne interpondeatur* (*D. p.* XLII, i. 48). A bishop translated his very short address into Greek.

² Constantine is represented as interposing very learnedly in these theological discussions. We may doubt this: for had he so well handled the subject of consubstantiality, he would not, soon after, have favored those who denied it, and sent their adversaries into exile. Eusebius (*Life of Const.* iii. 13) speaks only of his efforts to tranquilize men's minds, *incessu et concordiam incitat*.

Credo. Arius maintained that God had not always been a Father; that there was a time when the Son was not; that he was made by the will of God, as others are, having no previous existence at all; that he is not of the same substance with the Father, since the divine substance could not beget a substance equal to itself.—that is to say, unbegotten; that he is mutable by nature, but by his free will chose to remain virtuous. The great heresiarch asserted further that the Father is invisible to the Son, and the Son cannot know him perfectly, nor can even know his own substance.

Athanasius, with a train of reasoning contrary in purport but kindred in character, opposed this theogony born of the brain of Arius; and both arguments were logical, for logic is the instrument whereby men draw from premises conclusions which were placed therein. These subtleties interested the more learned Fathers, but did not touch the majority, composed of simple and devout men, many of whom bore marks of the persecution they had suffered, and had no need of so much argument to make them believe in their God. It was for the sake of the Christ that they had suffered torture and that so many of their kindred and friends had perished as martyrs,—for the Christ, the Son of God, himself the very God; when they were told that Jesus Christ could not be God except he were formed of the substance of the Father, they were ready to vote against this Arius who represented him as a kind of subordinate divinity little more than a man. The Greek language, with its infinite resources, gave the necessary word to designate this unity of substance, *ὁμοούσιος*, “homoousion,” which has been translated “consubstantial.”

Thus the divinity of Christ was distinctly recognized. There was still another danger to be guarded against: the Son must not be confounded with the Father. After establishing the identity of substance, the council preserved the distinction of persons by repeating the anathema against the Sabellians, who had in the acts of the Trinity seen only the working of one Divine Being, thus representing the historic Christ as only a temporary manifestation of God in the form of man. The decision of the council was really much more a matter of sentiment than of reason; but, after all, is it not sentiment that rules the world?

The *Credo* of Nicaea, which after fifteen centuries the Catholic Church still professes, is thus expressed: "We believe in one God, the Father Almighty. Maker of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, the only begotten of the Father, that is, of the substance of the Father; God of God.



THE RAISING OF LAZARUS (FROM A GILT GLASS).¹

light of light, true God of true God, begotten not made, consubstantial with the Father; by whom all things were made both in heaven and in earth; who, for us men and for our salvation, descended, was incarnate and was made man, and suffered, and rose again the third day; he ascended into heaven, and shall come to judge the living and the dead: and in the Holy Spirit."² And

¹ The Christ represented beardless, having in his hand a wand with which he touches Lazarus (Ach. Deville, *Histoire de la verrerie dans l'antiquité*, pl. 29).

² The *Credo* of the Mass [the Nicene Creed of the Church] is that which was determined upon by the second ecumenical council, at Constantinople in 381. To oppose heresies which had arisen since 325, this council made some addition to the original creed.

the council added: "But the holy catholic and apostolic Church of God anathematizes those who affirm that there was a time when the Son was not, or that he was not before he was begotten, or that he was made of things not existing; or who say that the Son of God was of any other substance or essence, or created, or liable to change."

All the bishops but two accepted this creed, and a synodal letter addressed by the thirteen archbishops or metropolitan bishops, Hosius at their head, transmitted it to all the churches "under heaven."¹

This brief declaration was the greatest event of history; for in fixing the doctrinal unity of the Church, the Nicaean Fathers secured her supremacy, and Constantine by this institution of general councils gave her the means of following the developments of Christian thought, and even of accelerating them. Up to this time the citizen's religious and civil duties had coincided; henceforward they became divergent, each order having its own law and its own master. The social unity was therefore about to be destroyed, and prolonged wars were to be waged between Pope and Emperor,—the representatives of these antagonistic principles,—who, by turns victor and vanquished, will, one of them suffer the humiliation of Canossa,² and the other finally shut himself up in his solitary Vatican.

established by the first council, which remains the basis of the Catholic faith. The words in italics were added in 381: "I believe in one God the Father Almighty, *Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible:* And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father *before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father;* by whom all things were made, who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate *by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary,* and was made man, *and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.* He suffered and was buried, and the third day he rose again according to the *Scriptures,* and ascended into heaven, *and sitteth on the right hand of the Father.* And he shall come again *with glory to judge both the quick and the dead: whose kingdom shall have no end.* And I believe in the Holy Ghost, *the Lord and Giver of life,* who proceedeth from the Father (*and the Son,* who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spake by the Prophets. And I believe one Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the Resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.") (Père Le Brun, of the Oratory, *Explication de la messe*, p. 249.)

¹ Labbe, *Conc. génér.* ii. 267.

² [The fortress of Canossa, in northern Italy, was the scene of the great humiliation of the Emperor Henry IV. before Pope Gregory VII. (Hildebrand.) It will be remembered that after a protracted quarrel between the two potentates on questions of their respective jurisdictions, the Pope finally excommunicated his antagonist, thus releasing all the latter's subjects from their obligations of obedience, and arming the whole world against him. Upon this

After the creed of the Church the council undertook its discipline. It timidly disposed of the case of Meletius, leaving him the title of bishop, but forbidding him to exercise the functions of the office. It fixed the date of Easter on the Sunday following the full moon nearest to the vernal equinox, and it also established twenty canons, or general rules of discipline. We shall mention only those important in general history.

Canon II. forbids the hasty ordination of new converts to Christianity.

Canon III. forbids the clergy to have women residing in their houses other than their nearest relatives or such as are beyond the reach of slander.¹

Canon IV. decrees that all the bishops of a province shall unite to constitute and ordain a bishop. But if this is inconvenient, through great necessity or the length of the journey, three at least shall be present to ordain a candidate, and then it shall be necessary that those absent consent thereto by letter; and the metropolitan bishop shall confirm what has been done.

the Emperor became alarmed, and crossing the Alps in midwinter (January, 1977), hastened to the castle where the Pope made his abode at the time. He was allowed to enter within the two outer of the three walls surrounding the fortress; but before the gate of the inner wall he was obliged to stand three whole days, fasting, bare-footed, bare-headed, clad in the thin white linen garb of the penitent, before the Pope deigned to admit him; and he finally received absolution only on conditions which rendered him the vassal of the Holy See.]

¹ [“The third canon guarded against the scandals which might arise from the ancient practice of the intimate companionship of the clergy with religious women not bound to them by the ties of close kindred. But connected with this decree was an abortive attempt, which discloses to us one of the most interesting scenes of the council” (Stanley’s *Hist. of the Eastern Church*, pp. 257–58). “It seemed fit to the bishops,” says Soocrates (*Hist. eccl.* i. 11), “to introduce a new law into the Church, that those who were in holy orders — I speak of bishops, presbyters, and deacons — should have no conjugal intercourse with the wives whom they had married previous to their ordination; and when it was proposed to deliberate on this matter, Paphnutius, bishop of Upper Thebais, a man of such eminent piety that extraordinary miracles were done by him, having arisen in the midst of the assembly of bishops, earnestly entreated them not to impose so heavy a yoke on the ministers of religion, asserting that ‘marriage is honorable among all,’ so that they ought not to injure the Church by too stringent restrictions. . . . It would be sufficient, he thought, that such as had previously entered on their sacred calling should abjure matrimony, according to the ancient tradition of the Church, but that none should be separated from her to whom, while yet unordained, he had been legally united. And these sentiments he expressed, although himself without experience of marriage: for from a boy he had been brought up in a monastery, and was specially renowned above all men for his chastity. The whole assembly of the clergy assented to the reasoning of Paphnutius: wherefore they silenced all further debate on this point, leaving it to those who were husbands to exercise their own discretion in reference to their wives.”]

Canon V. orders that they who have been separated from the Church by their own bishop shall not be received into communion elsewhere; also that a provincial synod shall be held twice every year to examine into such sentences of excommunication.¹

Canons VI. and VII. are decrees in respect to the primacy of certain churches — namely, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem — over their respective provinces; and mention is made of Rome as “always holding the first rank.”²

Canons IX. and X. require that presbyters who had *lapsed*, or had committed crimes before their ordination, such as would disqualify them for ordination, should be deprived of their offices as soon as such offences were discovered.

Canons XI., XII., and XIII. deal with the penances imposed upon apostates.³

Canons XV. and XVI. decree that bishops, presbyters, and deacons should remain in their own several churches, and not be transferred to others.⁴

¹ [“The fifth canon breathes an air of Anti-Nicene simplicity. It is intended to act as a check on the tyranny of individual bishops, to guard against the unjust exclusion of any one from the Church through the party spirit (*φιλονεκία*) or the narrow-mindedness (*μικροψυχία*) or the personal dislike (*ἀγρίδια*) of the bishop of any particular diocese. . . . The whole of this machinery has necessarily passed away; but the decree renders a striking testimony to the care with which the rights of individuals were guarded, and to the belief in the ancient evangelical doctrine of forbearance and forgiveness” (Stanley, *Hist. of the Eastern Church*, pp. 258, 259).]

² [“In this canon,” says Dean Stanley (*op. cit.* pp. 259, 260), “we see the first germ of the yet undeveloped patriarchates of the East; and in the one precedent selected for such a jurisdiction we see the organization of what was to become the patriarchate of the West. ‘This,’ the council says, ‘is to be laid down as is the custom in the parallel case of the Bishop of Rome.’ In later times, and especially at the Council of Chalcedon, this decree was made the ground of exalting the primacy of the Roman see above that of Constantinople, which of course had not been mentioned at Nicaea. But it is a remarkable instance of the cautious and deliberate spirit of the Nicene Council that the settlement of the jurisdiction refers to no grounds, historical or doctrinal, for its decision, but simply appeals to established usages in words which have since become almost proverbial, ‘Let ancient customs prevail.’”]

³ These were graduated as follows: the *flentes* wept outside the church; the *audientes* listened to the exhortations, but withdrew when the prayers began; the *prostrati* remained kneeling while the assembly prayed for them; the *consistentes* were present at the celebration of the eucharist, but were not allowed to partake of it. Each of these penances lasted for a period of years.

⁴ [“The fifteenth canon struck at a custom which prevailed, as it would seem, largely even at that early time, and which, in spite of this canon, was continued and probably will continue as long as the Church itself. It prohibits absolutely the translation of any bishop, presbyter, or deacon from one city to another. . . . There were at least two high personages in the council who must have weined under this decree, — the orthodox Eustathius of Antioch (translated from Berrhoea), and the heterodox Eusebius of Nicomedeia (translated from Berytus). But they would have had their revenge if they could have seen how soon the decree

Canon XVII. decrees that all clergymen guilty of usury be deposed.¹

Canon XIX. makes mention of deaconesses, who were consecrated to their office by prayer and the laying on of hands. There is some uncertainty in respect to this office; but deaconesses would seem to have performed the same duties towards women that deacons fulfilled towards men: namely, assisting the poor and sick, and instructing those who desired to be baptized.

The simple and beautiful words of the Sermon on the Mount had suffered transformation into an elaborate system of dogmas. Instead of the twelve disciples, there were now millions of men; and the Church, the successor of those early believers who had not known where to lay their heads, was now building that vast spiritual edifice which has for so many centuries sheltered the noblest portion of humanity.

The Church had condemned Arius; Constantine now banished him and ordered his books to be burned, threatening the death-penalty against any who should dare to keep them.² The bishops, his religious functionaries, having pronounced the sentence, the Emperor gave it a penal sanction in the same spirit that he caused the decrees of his judicial functionaries to be executed. Both were to him the guardians of the public peace.³ A few years later he

would have spent its force. Eusebius himself, who had subscribed this very decree, was translated, a few years later, from Nicomedeia to Constantinople, and it was thought so heroic a virtue in Eusebius of Caesarea to have declined a translation to the see of Antioch that Constantine declared him in consequence fit to be a bishop, not of a single city, but of the whole world. By the close of the century it was set aside as if it had never existed; and there is probably no Church in Europe in which the convenience or the ambition of men has not proved too strong for its adoption" (Stanley, *Hist. of the Eastern Church*, pp. 261, 262.)

¹ The civil law at this time in force authorized the rate of twelve per cent interest, and even of thirty-three per cent in the case of provisions . . . *duos medios qui accepit, tertium reddat* (*Codex theod.* ii. 33, 1).

² Socrates, *Hist. eccl.* i. 9, *ad fin.*: Sozomenus, i. 21. Two bishops of the Arian party, Eusebius of Nicomedeia and Theognis of Nicaea, received sentence of exile three months later (*Philostorgius*, i. 9-10). Constantine sent letters to the Nicaeans and Nicomedians, directing them to proceed to the election of other bishops (Gelasius of Cyzicus, iii. 2-3, and Theodoret, i. 20), and forbidding them to call this procedure disorderly, since they would be obliged to give account of their conduct to him as guardian *paris arbitrii erga Deum reverentiae*. Rufinus (*Hist. eccl.* i. 5) enumerates seventeen dissidents, of whom six were exiled with Arnius, the others signed the creed of Nicaea, — *manu sola, non mente*.

³ Constantine exiled bishops who displeased him, as Eusebius and Theognis, caused others to be chosen in their stead, and deposed these in turn, in order to reinstate the former (Sozomenus, ii. 27). That Constantine, after banishing Athanasius to Trèves, refrained from filling the vacant see of Alexandria, seems to have been due to the fact that the Emperor

issued, against the Valentinian, Marcionite, and Paulinian heretics, an edict closing their places of prayer and prohibiting their assemblies.¹ It was thus that the persecution had begun in the reign of Diocletian; happily Constantine did not proceed to such extremities. In placing the secular arm at the service of a creed,—an example which was never to be forgotten,—the Emperor was false to his promises of 313; but he did not inaugurate a new policy. Amid the ruins of that past which the Church had just destroyed, he made haste to restore the old doctrine of the Republican Senate, that the rites and ceremonies of religion were under the control of the state. The exterior aspect was different; instead of Jupiter there was Jehovah, and Christianity had become the official religion. But while the belief was different, the feeling was the same. Scarcely had the council separated when men saw enacted in the imperial palace one of the most odious tragedies in history, and in the year 326 Constantine promulgated three laws which were diametrically opposed to the spirit of Christianity, and even to the merciful character of the Antonine legislation.² The gods of Rome were dead; but the old Roman harshness still existed, and the penal laws of the first Christian Emperor are among the most severe in Roman legislation.

In dismissing the Nicaean Fathers Constantine gave them this order: “Let there be but little talking, and no disputing; it would give cause for laughter.”³ The recommendation was wise, but not easy to follow. Men kept silence for a time; then discussions and concealed intrigues began, and an unlooked-for event was approached.

dreaded the tumults which an episcopal election might occasion in that great and turbulent city.

¹ Eusebius, *Life of Const.* iii. 64–65. The text of Eusebius seems to be an amplification of the two edicts of 326 contained in the *Theodosian Code*, xvi. 5, 1 and 2, whereby the advantages given to the orthodox believers are refused to heretics and schismatics.

² A female servant in an inn, or even the hostess herself, cannot be accused of adultery, . . . quas vilitas ritue dignas legum observatione non creditit (*Codex Theod.* ix. 7, 1). The master whose slave perishes under the rod is not guilty of homicide if he declares that he did not intend to kill the man, nam cunctatio non vocatur ad crimen (*ibid.*, ix. 12, 2). The woman who had criminal intercourse with her slave was put to death, and the slave burned at the stake (*ibid.*, ix. 9, 1). By a law of 319 the decurion marrying a slave was condemned to banishment, with confiscation of property; the woman was sent to the mines, and her former master lost by confiscation one half of his possessions (*Codex Theod.* xii. 1, 6, and *Codex Just.* v. 5, 3). Theodosius, much more Christian than Constantine, still spoke of the *servili fauce*. On the laws of Constantine in regard to the exposure of children, see chap. cii. sect. 2.

³ *Sermonum copia haudquam . . . utilitatem afferre . . . ridendi prae beatior occasio* (Euseb., *De Vita Const.* iii. 21).

ing,—he who had been defeated at the council was soon to return triumphant, and those who had driven him out were themselves to be sent into exile.

In Egypt the Meletians did not observe a rule which the council had made in respect to the succession of their bishops, for it required a self-abnegation of which these men were not capable. Athanasius, raised to the episcopal throne of Alexandria, combated them with his habitual vigor; they retorted by attacking the validity of his election, so that at the same time schism and episcopal competitions broke out. The Arians, on the contrary, with the skill appropriate to defeated minorities, sent to the Emperor submissive letters, which gratified his desire for religious peace. Eusebius of Caesarea despatched to him a pastoral order in which the bishops had explained the use of the word “consubstantial” in the Nicene Creed as an unimportant novelty which had pleased the Emperor, and should therefore be accepted; Constantia on her death-bed implored the Emperor to consider well lest he should incur the wrath of God and suffer great temporal calamities since he had been induced to condemn good men to perpetual banishment; and Arius himself at last addressed to the Emperor a very orthodox profession of faith, lacking only the one word about which all this debate centred.¹ “Wherefore we beseech your piety, most devout Emperor, that we who are persons consecrated to the ministry, and holding the faith and sentiments of the Church and of the Holy Scriptures, may by your pacific and devoted piety be reunited to our mother the Church, all superfluous questions and disputes being avoided, that so both we and the whole Church, being at peace, may in common offer our accustomed prayers for your tranquil reign and on behalf of your whole family.”²

Constantine thought that the Eusebian party was decidedly the party of peace, and that they would be more satisfactory auxiliaries than the intractable orthodox, who were already so arrogant towards the temporal power. He recalled from exile Eusebius and Theognis, restored to them their bishoprics, expelling those who had been elected in their stead.³ and wrote to Athanasius to receive Arius

¹ The word was there, indeed, but with the addition of a letter, and this changed the entire doctrine: *homoiōsim*, instead of *homousim*,—the former signifying “of like substance,” the latter, “of the same substance.”

² Socrates, i. 26; Sozomenus, ii. 27.

³ Socrates, i. 14.

into his church. The bishop replied curtly that he could not do this. To the Emperor, proposing to govern the Christian clergy as he had ruled the pagan priesthood, this reply was a scandalous act of disobedience. He at once sent two of his guards to Alexandria with this message: "You will freely admit to the church those who desire to enter; otherwise you shall be deposed from your office and banished from the city."

In Syria Eustathius, the bishop of Antioch, had, like Athanasius, attacked the Arians with great vigor, and offended many bishops by his theological warmth, his imperious zeal, and his claim to interfere in the government of their churches. The path to be followed in these subtle discussions is very narrow, and to slip aside is extremely easy: a word or a letter out of its place is heresy. Eustathius, accused of Sabellianism, was deposed by a synod in which the Eusebians were the majority. The people of Antioch taking part with their bishop, the Emperor sent one of his officers to repress these tumults and to present for the vacant see two candidates between whom the synod should decide. The sedition was evidently serious, for Eustathius was exiled, with many of his priests and deacons, and part of the people long remained attached to him.¹

At this time the Goths and Sarmatians threatened the Empire, and a war with Persia seemed imminent. Constantine abandoned the affairs of the Church for negotiations and for arms. He left undisturbed in Alexandria the bishop who had dared to oppose his will, and appeared to forget the Eustathians in Antioch who refused to accept their new prelate. Quarrels, however, still continued among heretics, schismatics, and the orthodox believers. While the Emperor was waging war upon the Danube and exchanging messages with Sapor, the work of his council was beginning to be undermined throughout the East. Arianism gratified the very rational tendency, which has reappeared in modern times in certain Protestant sects, to bring Jesus nearer to humanity: accordingly it made great progress in the Asiatic provinces; it invaded the episcopal sees, and even reached the imperial court. But the true author of the Nicene Creed, he who was the pillar of the Orthodox Church, still

¹ Perhaps we may place at this time the revolt of one Caloretius, of whom it is known only that he raised an insurrection in the Island of Cyprus, assumed the title of emperor, and was burned to death. This person may be the same with Philumenes, to whom Athanasius was said to have sent money.

remained in his place, and the Eusebians resolved to cast him down. Frauds and crimes were imputed to him; he was summoned to appear at Caesarea, and later at Tyre, before a synod in which his adversaries were the majority;¹ he was accused before the Emperor of sacrilege and sorcery, and — a more serious charge in the eyes of Constantine — of crimes against the state: he had, it was said, by incessant appeals impoverished his diocese in order to amass great sums of money, and he had hoarded up in Alexandria the corn of Egypt while Constantinople was suffering from famine. In the case of a man like Athanasius, such charges are stupid calumnies. That his episcopal sway was stern, his orthodoxy uncompromising, his estimate of the rights of the Church very different from that held by the Emperor, is undoubtedly true. But this was not enough for those to say whom his great fame offended; they accepted the slanders of folly, hatred, or envy with that singular facility which religious parties always have had in conscientiously welcoming the most abominable imputations against their adversaries. "Our enemy," says Gregory Nazianzen, "is always a heretic." Where the greatest charity should be manifested is found the greatest vindictiveness; and for the reason that in these contests earth and heaven are both at stake.

Constantine had sent to the Synod of Tyre Dionysius, a man of consular rank, to make known to the bishops the imperial will and to exercise surveillance over their proceedings. Dionysius was the bearer of a haughty letter, in which Constantine said: "If any refuse to obey me, they shall learn by exile that no man is permitted to resist the orders of the Emperor."² These words show what attitude the Emperor assumed towards the bishops, — he proposed to remain their master; and those who were the adherents of Athanasius were unwilling to have a master. "How could such men" (the Eusebians), they wrote later, speaking of the Synod of Tyre, in a letter addressed to the whole body of bishops, "entertain the purpose of holding a meeting against us? How can they have the boldness to call that a council at which a single count presided, which an

¹ They came even from Egypt: for Athanasius had but forty-nine bishops on his side, and there were present more than a hundred in all.

² Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, iv. 42; ἀπέστειλα διονίσιου . . . ὃς καὶ τοὺς ἐφειδοῦτα εἰς τὴν σύνοδον ἀφιχέσθαι μεθ' ἴμων ὑπομήσει καὶ τῶν πραττομένων ἔξαρέτως δὲ τῆς εὐταξίας κατάσκοπος παρέσται . . . , etc.

executioner attended, and where a chief jailer, instead of the deacons of the Church, introduced us into court, and where only the count



FRAGMENTS OF A MOSAIC FOUND NEAR TYRE.¹

spoke, and all present held their peace, or rather obeyed his directions? The removal of those bishops who seemed to deserve it was

¹ In 1860 M. Renan discovered in the neighborhood of Sour (Tyre), at Kahiberam, a mosaic which had been used as the pavement of a church. "The work," he says, "is neither pagan nor Christian; it belongs, as the Chevalier Rossi has shown, to that transitional period when a sort of realism was leading insensibly from pagan to Christian art, when the gods of the ancient world were giving place to the months and seasons personified. Jupiter, Venus, Mars, Saturn no longer figure as gods, but as planets, or else represent days." For the explanation of this curious mosaic,—a copy of which, made by an Italian by order of Napoleon III., is now in the Louvre,—see M. Renan's *Mission de Phénicie*, pp. 611–626. Rossi and Longpérier believe that this work dates from the fourth century, but that it was appropriated to a Christian use in the sixth or seventh. The details given on this page form part of the border.

prevented at his desire; and when he gave the order we were dragged about by soldiers. To conclude, dear brethren, what manner of council was this, the object of which was banishment and murder at the pleasure of the Emperor?"¹

These men who spoke so scornfully of the civil power, and claimed with so much pride "a free church," which they proposed to rule, had a legitimate ambition; for the religious conscience can be subjected to no other law than that which it gives itself. But the religious dominion is not clearly separated from the temporal, and he who holds the former, frequently aspires to seize upon the latter. What an overthrow of ancient principles, and for the imperial government what a sacrilegious innovation! The Emperors of the East could never submit to it, and the Czar, their successor, has followed in their track.

A few years after the publication of the edict which gave the Christians a right to live, the partisans of Athanasius proposed to their liberator the great problem which was to distract the Middle Ages and the modern world. It is easy to see how Constantine, regarding this haughty independence as a dangerous opposition to his government, should have passed over to the Arian side, and banished Athanasius to the city of Trèves in Gaul,—an exile doubly severe for this Egyptian.

Arius was victorious; the bishop of Constantinople was ordered to admit him to the Communion. But on the day when, accompanied by his friends, he went through the streets of the city to the church, he was taken suddenly ill, and died. A legend quickly gathered about this event. It was related that the old bishop, filled with horror at the order which he had received from the Emperor's own lips, had fallen, weeping, before an altar, praying the Lord to avert the sacrilege in any way that seemed to him good. Whereupon Arius, on his way to the church, was seized with mortal sickness, and fell dead before his feet had profaned its

¹ This letter is given by Saint Athanasius in his *Apologia*. In the next chapter (see t. 4) we shall see that debates on this important question, "Shall the Church be free, or in subjection to the Emperor?" filled the entire reign of Constantine. The Emperor never yielded, as Athanasius wished, the right to direct the councils. Even in 411, under the feeble and very orthodox Honorius, the Comes Marecellinus, not a very well-established Christian, presided over the famous conference at Carthage, at which were present Saint Augustine and two hundred African bishops. After three days of discussion, Marecellinus declared that the orthodox had vanquished the Donatists.

threshold (336). The orthodox believers then caused him to suffer death a second time, in the destruction of his works; and of the writings of this vigorous thinker nothing has been left to posterity.

Athanasius derived no advantage from his rival's death. Certain Alexandrians solicited his recall; Saint Antonius even, whose austerities in the Egyptian deserts had given him great popularity, was persuaded to write to the Emperor in his behalf. Constantine replied to the former that he was weary of their follies and frivolities, and to the monk that Athanasius was a seditious person justly condemned by an ecclesiastical sentence.¹

On their side the Donatists, passing from schism to heresy, no longer recognized the validity of the sacraments administered by the Catholics, and re-baptized the Christians who came to them. They invaded a great number of the African bishoprics; they even strove to deprive the orthodox party of the Roman see, one of them going so far as to dispute Saint Peter's chair with the Pope. From the midst of this chaos of religious passions and holy animosities came forth a sect, the *circumcelliones* (*cirea villas euntes*), who called themselves "God's soldiers against the devil," and in the name of Heaven made savage war upon society. They went through the country armed with huge clubs, seeking martyrdom and inflicting it. They set the slaves at liberty, abolished debts, and attacked masters and creditors everywhere. When their war-cry, "Praise be to God!" was heard outside a village, all men fled or concealed themselves, but did not always escape the blows of these fanatics.²

With anarchy like this in doctrines and in the social conditions, ended the reign of that Emperor who adopted Christianity for the sake of giving peace to the Empire.

¹ Sozomenus, *Hist. eccl.* ii. 31.

² *Deo laudes.* These words are found in inscriptions (*C. I. L.* vol. viii. Nos. 2,046, 2,223, 2,308). Saint Augustine frequently mentions the circumcellions (Cf. *Enarratio in Psalm CXXXVII.* 6), and in modern times their history has been written by Tillemont in his *Mémoires ecclés.* vii. 147-165. This sect lasted until the Arab invasion in the seventh century uprooted Christianity in Africa.

**IV.—LAST YEARS OF CONSTANTINE (326–337); FOUNDATION
OF CONSTANTINOPLE.**

To his ecclesiastical biographer, Constantine is a monk always at his prayers or engaged in devout exercises with his bishops, a preaching friar who catechises his courtiers daily and passes his days and nights in preparing sermons on impiety and falsehood, on God's unity and providence, on the last judgment, and on the chastisements reserved for wicked and selfish men.¹ Of the head of a great Empire in process of reconstruction, of the legislator who filled the codes with his laws, of the soldier kept on the alert by the Barbarians who surrounded his provinces, not a word is said. In the first portion of the present sketch of Constantine we have seen the emperor, his military talents, his ambition, and his cruelty; in the two succeeding, we have followed the statesman bringing about a religious transformation in the Roman world: it remains to us to examine the domestic tragedies of his reign, his foreign wars, and the laws or institutions which owe their origin to him.

In the year following the Council of Nicaea, Constantine went to Rome, for the first time since his victory over Maxentius. He arrived there about the middle of July, 326. It was at the time when the *transvectio equitum* took place.² The knights, mounted on fine horses and clad in splendid armor, traversed the city in procession and went up to the Capitol, there to offer to Jupiter the prayers of the Roman youth,—a solemnity originally patriotic and military, but now merely a pagan festival. The Emperor remained upon the Palatine, and with contempt watched the passage of this half-obliterated image of the conquering Rome of early days.

¹ Eusebius, *Life of Const.* iv. 29. Burekhardt (*Die Zeit Constantins*, p. 357) is inclined to take in good faith these theological lectures delivered by Constantine to his court and people: he compares them to the communications which modern governments make to the Press for the purpose of guiding public opinion. The remark is ingenious, but, in my judgment, it contains too much ingenuity.

² Suetonius, *Oet.* 38; Zosimus, ii. 29. This review of the equestrian order occurred on the 15th of July.

The people revenged themselves by sarcasms for this disdain of the ancient customs, and the insolence of the crowd went so far that some of the imperial counsellors suggested a military repression.

Constantine had the good sense not to inflict punishment. He had, moreover, many other and heavier anxieties, oppressed as he

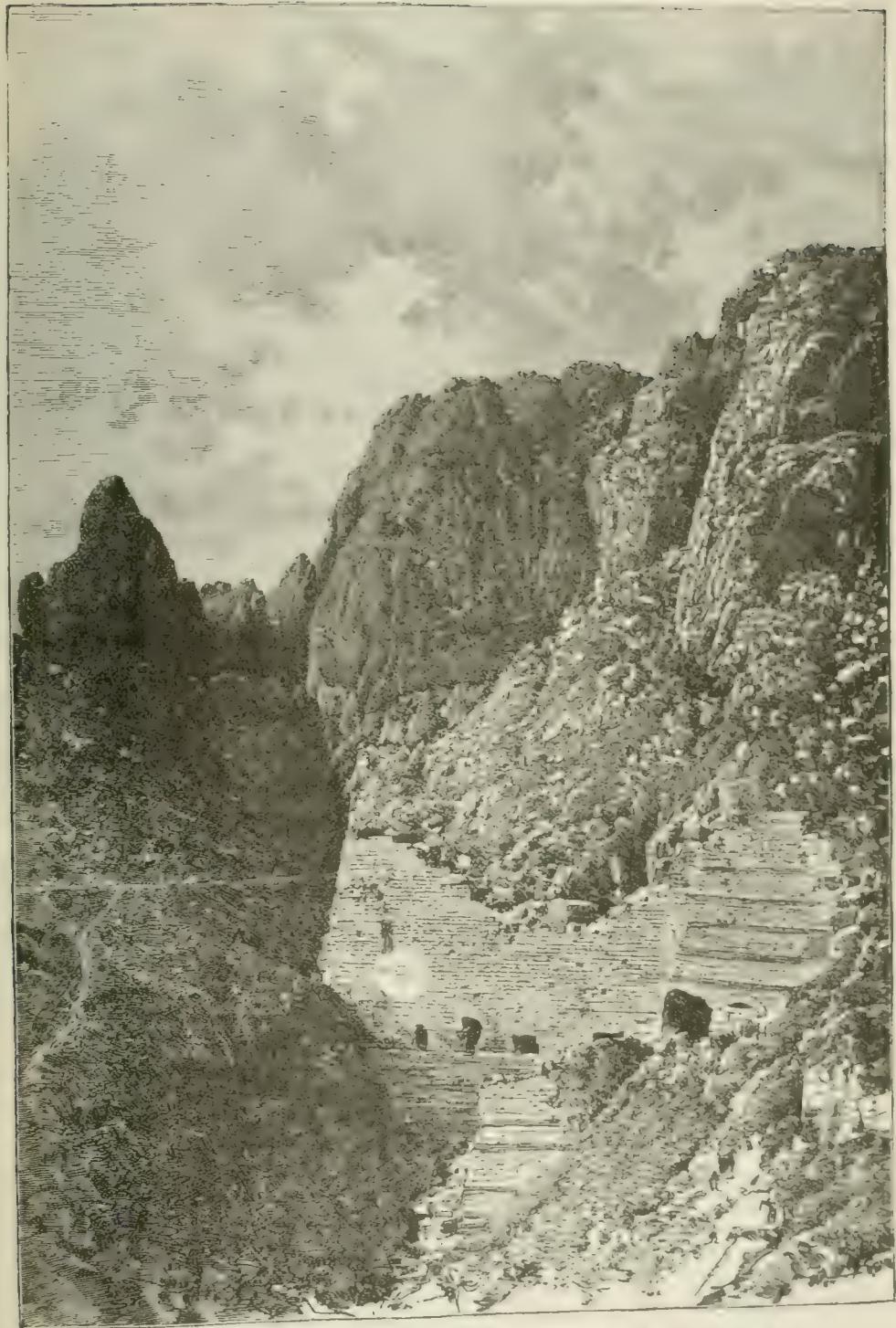


CONSTANTINE'S BATHS, AT ROME.¹

was with the gloomy thoughts which were to lead him shortly to put to death his eldest son and the mother of his younger children. From the month of September preceding, a few weeks after the closing of the Council of Nicaea, we find him pre-occupied and uneasy; at a moment when he had reason to rejoice over a great political achievement, he addresses an edict to all the provinces of the Empire, calling for the denunciation of criminals.² He speaks only, of *praeraricationes*, because he could not speak publicly of

¹ *Etiam perire ruinæ.* These baths occupied a space on the Quirinal 2,625 feet in circumference. Nothing of them remains, except some scattered fragments in the cellars of the Palazzo Rospigliosi and in the Aldobrandini Gardens. In these thermae were found the reclining statues of the Nile and the Tiber, and the two colossal statues of Constantine now in the Piazza Campidoglio: these are given facing pages 440 and 464, from drawings made at Rome by M. Fritel. The cut given above represents the condition of the Baths in 1575 (from Du Pérac).

² *Ad universos provinciales. XV kal. oct. (325). Codex Theod. ix. 1, 4.*



THE GATES OF ANTIQUITY (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY CAPTAIN BARRY).

any other offences; but he desires all men to bring to him, in perfect security, any complaint against his judges, his *comites*, his friends even, and perhaps especially against the soldiers of his guard and his household officers. "Let any man come without fear," he says; "let him speak to me alone. I will hear everything: I will make investigation myself. If the accuser prove his charge, he shall receive reward; and thus may the Supreme God be propitious to me and to the state."

This appeal to the divine protection for the safety of the Emperor and the Empire is not made in cases of obscure and trivial offences. This professed desire for the public weal conceals the anxiety of a ruler who calls for denunciations and proposes to receive them personally, because in so doing he hopes to find and grasp the clew to an intrigue by which he feels that he is surrounded.

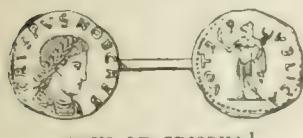
We are reduced to conjectures in respect to this mysterious affair.

Shall we suppose that the great catholic solemnity of the previous year had angered his pagan subjects against this Emperor who pre-

sides over an assembly of bishops? Is it possible that a plot had been formed to replace the monarch, apostate from the national religion, by his eldest son, who might be brought back to the ancestral cult? Pro-

longed reigns give rise to much impatience, and Diocletian had established the rule of abdication after twenty years. Now, Constantine had just celebrated his *vicesima*; was it not time to end this reign at its constitutional limit? At the court, two factions were certainly formed at a very early period,—one surrounding Crispus, who by his age and by his victories in Gaul and on the Hellespont appeared to have the first claim; the other gathering about the sons of Fausta, much younger, but protected by their mother's influence. The Empress, who could not but dread the idea that her sons should one day have for master the son of Minervina, doubtless often—

¹ The obverse bears the laurelled head of the prince and the words CRISPVS NOB[ilissimus] CAES[ar]. On the reverse is a figure of Anubis, standing, and VOTA PVBLICA. (Bronze coin.)



COIN OF CRISPUS.¹



THE EMPRESS FAUSTA
(BRONZE MEDALLION).

daughter, sister, and wife of emperors that she was — contrasted the noble blood of her children with the inferior race of Crispus. Family ties are not strong in Oriental courts, and those nearest the throne are often peculiarly in danger. Crispus, who may have been called the concubine's son, by way of contesting his right to the paternal inheritance, perhaps replied to these concealed attacks by imprudently encouraging the hopes of his friends. In times of violence, when two parties exist in the state, each faction desires and aims at the extermination of the other. Should we go too far if we suppose Constantine rendered uneasy by the young reputation of his son, and the dangers it caused to the sons of Fausta ?

These reasons are all only conjectural ; but none more probable have ever been offered, and if the evil light which shines from this tragedy does not make clear its details, it at least shows causes clearly enough.

As the children of Fausta grew older, the importance of Crispus manifestly diminished. Constantine, the eldest, had long been Caesar ; Constantius, the second, had received this title in 323, with the government of the Gallic provinces,¹ and though scarcely ten years of age, had just been associated with his father in the consulship (326). These reiterated marks of the affection of Constantine for his younger sons, the inaction in which Crispus appeared to be designedly retained, and, finally, the insults of the Roman populace to the Emperor, which made it seem probable that these pagans would willingly place a popular riot at the service of an intrigue, determined the Empress. Crispus was accused of meditating parricide ; all the officers of the palace who had attached their fortunes to his, were represented as being his accomplices ; witnesses were brought forward, either suborned or truthful : and the Emperor gave the order for his son's arrest, as guilty of treason. The young man was for a time imprisoned at Pola in Istria. But captives of this sort are not long kept alive ; Crispus shortly perished, either by the sword or by poison.² At the same time a number of important persons who had been guilty of the imprudence of being devoted to the Emperor's eldest son were also put to death.³ Lactantius, the preceptor of Crispus, seems to

¹ Julian, *Disc.* i. 12.

² Zosimus, ii. 29 ; Philostorgius, ii. 4.

³ *Interfecit numerosos amicos* (Eutropius, x. 6). Eutropius places these murders after the death of Fausta : in my judgment, they preceded it.

have been involved in this disaster. This most eloquent of the Christian apologists, whose style has been compared to that of Cicero, shortly after ended his life in exile and penury. "He suffered from hunger," says Saint Jerome.¹

A boy twelve years of age, Licinianus Caesar, appeared to Constantine likely at some future time to cause trouble. He was the son of a sister, Constantia, whom the Emperor loved. We cannot say whether or not Crispus was guilty of treasonable designs;² but it is quite certain that the only fault of Licinianus was that he existed. The man who had caused the death of his father-in-law, his nephew, the young son of Maxentius, his sister's husband, and the two Caesars of Licinius, did not hesitate at the murder of a boy, to make a clear space for his remaining sons. Whether pagan or Christian, he manifested always the same cold and implacable cruelty.

The tragedy was not yet ended. In the imperial palace lived Helena, the aged mother of the Emperor, a rough-mannered, energetic woman, to whom the murder of Crispus was a horrible crime. Repudiated by Constantius Chlorus, she had seen the imperial title and honors pass to a rival; when policy expelled Minervina, as it had driven out herself, from an Emperor's dwelling, this similarity in misfortune attached her to the son whom that daughter-in-law had borne to Constantine, and who was to grow up with a stepmother in his father's house. Helena watched over the boy with anxiety, and towards the children of Fausta she felt the same aversion that the latter manifested towards Crispus. Between these two women no doubt a mutual hatred existed. How did Helena succeed in making Fausta appear the author of abominable machinations?³ This we do not know; but we have the fact that, by order of Constantine, the Empress was seized by her women, shut up in a hot bath, and smothered.

¹ *Chron. ad ann. 318: . . . Adeo in hac vita pauper est, ut p'rumque etiam necessares indiquerit.*

² A tradition to this effect is preserved by Gregory of Tours; but it was for the interest of the Flavians to have it believed.

³ Licinianus Caesar, helmeted and cuirassed.

⁴ On the subject of this interposition of Helena, Zosimus and Aurelius Victor unite their testimony: . . . ἐπὶ τῷ τηλικοίτῳ πάθει δυσχεραινόσης καὶ ἀτχεῶς τερπαντούσης τεφρούσης . . . says one; *Cum cum mater Helenā doire nimis rēpōtē in cōpātē*, says the other.



GOLD COIN.³

She was at an age when women have no further passion except for power and for the future of their children. Certain writers, however, have represented Fausta as another Phaedra, revenging herself for the disdain of a second Hippolytus, and finally put to death by her husband on discovery of her intrigue with a slave of the imperial stables.¹ This was a method of exculpating Constantine; but in estimating the character of Fausta we should remember that Julian speaks of her with respect. Amid the uncertainty produced by the silence ordered in respect to these executions, the historian passes by the victims and reserves his reprobation for their murderer.



INTERIOR OF ST. JOHN LATERAN.³

Constantine, were to make it a maxim of state policy to murder their nearest kindred.

Constantine bestowed upon the Bishop of Rome the palace of Fausta, upon the site of which now stands the church of St. John Lateran, with the baptistery which is said to be, but is not, the one wherein Constantine was baptized. Shall we regard this gift as one of those easy expiations of which the Middle Ages saw so many, or did remorse hinder the murderer from keeping possession of the abode in which his victim had lived? We cannot say; but for the second time this palace was the price of blood.⁴

¹ τῶν κουρασφων (Philostorgius, ii. 4). According to usage, the names of Crispus and of Fausta were effaced from the public edifices (*Bull. épigr. de la Gaule*, for 1883, p. 141).

² These two lines were put up on the gates of the palaces (Sidon. Apol., *Ep.* v. 19), making allusion to the double murder and to the effeminate splendor of the Emperor's dress, which was covered with pearls and gems.

³ Rohault de Fleury, *Le Latran*, pl. xix.

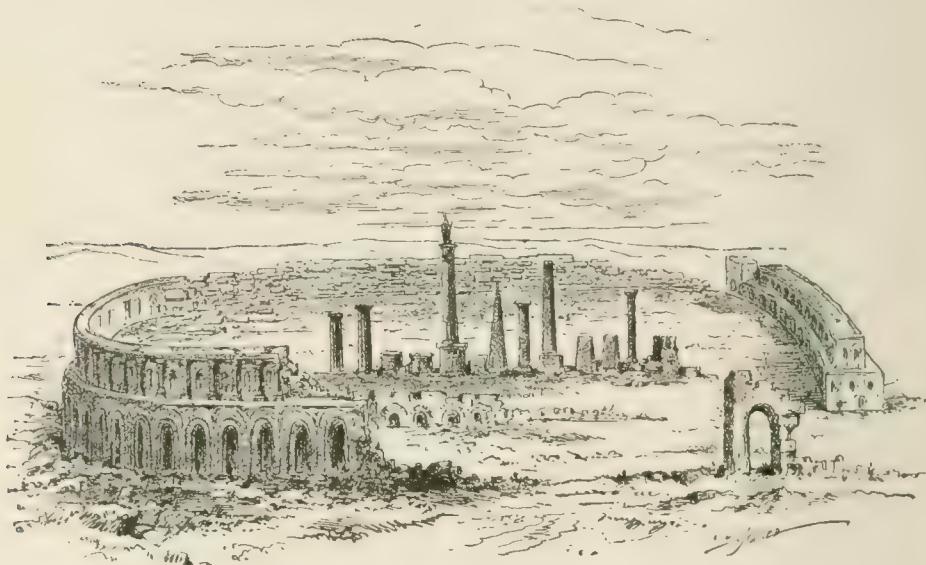
⁴ See, in Tacitus, the execution of Lateranus, under Nero. The account given by Zosimus (ii. 29), quite untrue though it is, shows in the Emperor's mind an inquietude which did perhaps exist.

The double tragedy which we have just related, marks for Constantine the close of his prosperous days, and nearly the close of his reign. He lived, indeed, eleven years after this; but these years are void of events: one only is of importance, the founding of Constantinople. For forty years Rome, abandoned by her Emperors, had been in disgrace with them for her captious spirit and her pagan zeal. An Asiatic court would have been ill at ease in the midst of the memories awakened by the words "Senate," and "Roman people," and "Forum," and a Christian Emperor could not dwell in the midst of all these pagan temples and in the presence of that Capitol where Jupiter was forever enthroned. Military reasons were added to political and religious in commanding this desertion of Rome. On the west, the Empire had reached the extremities of the world: on the south it bordered the desert, whence nothing disturbing could come; on the north it had its old German neighbor, which, so many times smitten by the legions, seemed now more troublesome than formidable. But in the East it was adjacent, along an immense frontier from the lower Danube to the Euphrates, to two menacing Barbaric powers, — a new Germany, that of the Goths, and a young empire, that of the Sassanidae. The city of Rome was too remote from the Tigris, beyond which Persia was again maturing ambitious schemes, too remote from the shores of the Euxine and of the lower Danube, where were gathering formidable Barbaric masses. Lastly, and chiefly, for a new religion there was needed a new capital.

At the entrance of the Propontis, between the Thracian Bosphorus and the Hellespont, on the shore of a deep and narrow bay which stretches far into the land, stood an ancient and renowned city, whose strength of resistance had been proved by the two great sieges in which it had held out against Septimius Severus and Constantine. Thence the Roman fleets might keep guard over the Asiatic and the European coasts of the Euxine, and give opportunity to fall upon the rear of Barbarians whom a rapid march of the legions upon the lower Danube should arrest in their advance. If the attack came from Asia, European troops transported to Sinope and to Trebizond easily reached the upper valley of the Euphrates and the provinces across the Tigris. For a century the Empire had leaned towards the East, whence its religious beliefs came

to it, and its most serious dangers; it was needful to follow its fortunes thither. Diocletian had sought a new capital at Nicomedeia; Constantine did better in placing his at Byzantium.

His resolution taken, he hurried forward the work with that impatient activity manifested by him in all things,—an activity that led him to write to his governors of provinces: “Send me word, not that your edifices are begun, but that they are finished.” He built a



HIPPODROME AT CONSTANTINOPLE.¹

new wall, five leagues in length, to include the hillocks that were designated the Seven Hills of the New Rome; for himself he constructed an immense palace; for the inhabitants baths, public fountains, a hippodrome,² a forum surrounded by two-storied porticos; for the Christians a church, that of the Holy Apostles, where he intended to be buried; possibly that of the Holy Peace (Saint Irene),—a characteristic devotion, indeed, for peace had been the life-long aim of this

¹ From a plan anterior to the capture of Constantinople by the Turks (Rich, *Dict. of Antiq.*, at the word “circus”).

² The hippodrome had been begun by Septimius Severus, and was finished by Constantine; two obelisks, still standing, indicate the direction of the *spina*. As to the palace, the one which was yet standing in the tenth century, and had been much enlarged by the successors of Constantine, “covered a space of 400,000 metres,—a little larger than that covered by the Louvre and the Tuilleries, buildings, courts, carrousel, and gardens.” (Labarte, *Le Palais impérial de Constantinople*, etc. p. 217.)

man of violence. The pagans retained their temples,¹ and saw the most revered statues of the ancient gods brought to decorate the public buildings and squares.

As the consuls and Emperors in earlier times had plundered Greece and Asia to adorn their capital, so now he ornamented his at the expense of the ancient sanctuaries. Olympia indeed retained the Pheidian Jupiter up to the time of Theodosius, and the Minerva Promachos of Athens caused Alaric to shrink back in awe; but the Pallas of Lindos, the Zeus of Dodona, the Muses of the Helicon, came to ornament the gates of the senatorial palace.² Castor and Pollux, Apollo and the Delphic tripod, were placed in the Hippodrome; Cybele and the Roman Fortuna, near the Forum. From Rome alone Constantine carried off sixty statues.³ When, in other days, the masterpieces of Greek genius were transported to the capital of the world, it had been at least after a victory, and the statues of the gods paid the ransom of men.

¹ See p. 500. Constantine did not destroy Byzantium, the rich and important city; he merely aggrandized it (*Soz.*, i. 16). The Emperor's edifices were built in the new quarters of the city, as the older part of Byzantium kept all that it had before, — the baths of Severus, for instance, which Constantine enlarged and embellished, and its temples, where later Julian sacrificed.

² *Zosimus*, v. 24.

³ Banduri, *Antiq. Constantin.* i. 100. He took from Cybele her lions, and changed the position of her hands, to give her the attitude of prayer (*Zosimus*, ii. 31).

⁴ Marble statue from the Museum of Naples.

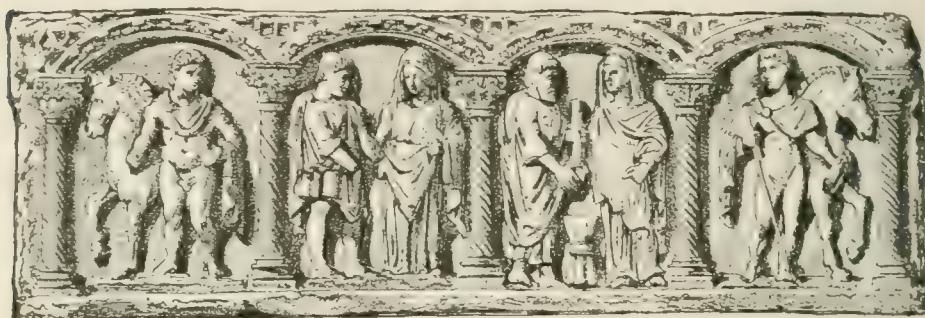


MINERVA.⁴

The New Rome, called officially Constantinople, had, like the earlier one, its mysterious name, Flora, or Ἀνθοῦσα;¹ it had also a senate, which long remained poor and obscure, although Constantine

had attracted thither some of the Conspect Fathers of Rome by the gifts of palaces in the city, and domains in Thrace or Bithynia.² It had also knights,—as Rome still had, although they no longer did military service,³—and it obtained for its territory privileges of the *jus italicum*,⁴ and for its inhabitants distributions of corn, wine, and oil, which had the effect of depopulating the adjacent country, as those of Rome

PHEIDIAN JUPITER.⁵



CASTOR AND POLLUX, ON A CHRISTIAN SARCOPHAGUS AT ARLES.⁶

had desolated its suburban region;⁷ but Constantinople had not yet the urban prefect, who was given it later, in 359. Constantine

¹ Lydus, *De Mens.* iv. 51; *Chron. Paschale*, p. 528, ed. of Bonn.

² Later it had an urban prefect and one of the two consuls, the other remaining at Rome (Tillemont, iv. 240).

³ What remained of the equestrian order continued to rank next to the senatorial order (*Codex Theod.* vi. 36; xiii. 5, 16; and *Codex Just.* xii. 32, 1, anno 364).

⁴ *Codex Theod.* xiv. 13, 1. The peculiarities of the *jus italicum* were to give,—1st, quiritarian ownership, that is to say, special methods of acquiring property, peculiar to the ancient Romans, and since Caracalla's time no longer existing; 2d, exemption from the land-tax. Cf. Baudoin, the *Jus Italicum*, p. 141.

⁵ On a bronze coin of Athens.

⁶ *Gazette archéol.*, 1878, pl. i. M. E. Le Blant has a monograph on this sarcophagus (*ibid.*, ap. 1-6); he calls attention to the circumstance that the two Dioseuri are represented of different ages, the one beardless, the other bearded, — which is contrary to the traditions of mythologic art. The two compartments of the centre represent a husband and wife parting in this world or meeting in another. (See F. Ravaïsson, *Les Monuments funéraires des Grecs*.)

⁷ Socrates (ii. 13) says that at Constantinople 80,000 measures of corn were distributed daily; he gives no indication whether he speaks of *modii*, about a peck of our measure, or of *medimni*, six times as much. Procopius, speaking of the frumentary benefactions of Diocletian at Alexandria, states them in *medimni*: but in the time of Procopius, the sixth century,

did not venture to place the New Rome absolutely on an equal footing with the Old.¹

In order to hasten the work of building, he prohibited every land-owner in the districts of Asia and Pontus from making a will unless he had a house in Constantinople.² This was a violation of one of the oldest rights of the Roman citizen; but the Emperor expected laws and customs to bend before his impatience. He changed also, in his favorite city, the character of the *frumentationes*; he assigned a share in the distributions to the houses built in Constantinople, which was sold along with the house itself.³

everything was put in Greek at Constantinople, while in the fourth century the metric system of Rome was still in use. When Constantine gave the inhabitants of Byzantium the advantages which the people of Rome enjoyed, the *modius* was the measure in use in distributions. Now, 80,000 *modii* daily make 29,200,000 a year, or two and a half times as much as the 12,000,000 given at Alexandria (p. 377), and these figures justify in a degree the words of Eunapius (*Lives of the Sophists*, s. v. Aedesius): "Neither the ships of Egypt nor the frumentary contributions of Asia, Syria, Phoenicia, and the other provinces suffice to satisfy the multitude in Constantinople." We have seen that the distributions at Rome in the time of Septimius Severus were 75,000 *modii* daily, or 27,375,000 a year: this is very nearly the amount distributed by Constantine: whence we may infer that the number of recipients was about the same, namely, 200,000. Besides these gratuitous distributions, Constantinople had also, like Rome, the sale at a reduced price. Theodosius II, in 409, expended 500 pounds of gold annually in this liberality (*Codex Theod.* xiv. 1; cf. Godefroy, vi. 261). A law of Constantine (*Codex Theod.* xi. 3, 1) seems to prove that before his time all the provinces had been rendered annenary; an ordinance of Anastasius in 494 shows that all *possessores* were subjected to it, except those of the province of Thrace, which was ravaged by the Barbarians (*Codex*, x. 27, 1), and it must have been necessary to make this tax universal, for the expense was increasing every day. To the gifts made at Rome, Alexandria, Carthage (*ibid.* xiv. 25, anno 315), and Athens (Julian, 1st *Paneg.* 8), were added distributions to the members of the provincial administration and of the court, — a list every day growing longer, — not to speak of those made to the soldiers. Soon after this, indeed, if not already, the *annona* and the *cellaria* were given to the sacerdotal body (see above, p. 508, n. 2). The transportation of all this grain occupied a great number of vessels, whose value was not included in the census of the *navigularii* (*Tac.*, *Ann.* xiii. 51), which was so much more lost to the public treasury: and the owners of those vessels were *a civilibus maneribus et oneribus et obsequis immixti*, a further burden to the cities (*Codex Theod.* xiii. 5, 7). These advantages had been granted by the first Emperors to the ship-owners and merchants who provisioned Rome. (See in the *Dig.* L, sect. 5, *de vacacione et excusatione munera*.) The provincials had the further obligation of carrying the provisions destined for the army to the military magazines or to storehouses adjacent to the camps (*Codex Theod.* vii. 4, 15, anno 369). Forage must also be brought to the *narraciones* of the *cursus publicus*. — It has been said in the text that the distributions of corn and oil and lard had depopulated the country around Rome and Constantinople: this is true for the time when the distributions were first established; the list of beneficiaries being once made out, however, new names were inscribed only in the place of those of persons who had died, and the invasion of the poor from the outside ended. (See Vol. IV. pp. 115 *et seq.*)

¹ Socrates says (i. 16): . . . ὅτην τε τῆς βασιλευούσης Ρωμαίου ἀποδεῖξας.

² *Nov. Theod.* v. 1, sect. 1.

³ . . . Integer canon mancipibus consignetur, annona in puto coeto dominibus exhibenda (*Codex Theod.* xiv. 16, 2, and sect. 17, laws 1 and 12; Sozomenus, ii. 3).

These liberalities were no longer due to the haughty feeling of the Republic that to the conquerors belong the proceeds of the labor of the conquered; nor did they arise from the charitable sentiment of the Early Empire,—a relief to the poor. It was an advantage offered to the rich, who had no need of it, and the provinces were forced to gratify, at heavy cost to themselves, the ostentatious vanity of the monarch who wished to create in a few months a city which should eclipse all others. But Rome has well avenged herself: of her pagan Emperors she has preserved grand memories, and their buildings have left to her ruins which are the world's admiration; of the first Christian Emperor, her hastily created rival has retained nothing but the name.

Although art, at this time far in its decline, adorned Constantinople with no beautiful structures, men's imagination, which then was extremely active in the religious sphere, surrounded the city's origin with circumstances of marvel. The earliest days of the new capital were made witnesses of prodigies more wonderful than those the city by the Tiber had beheld. The god Mars had determined the site of the older city by arresting there the floating cradle of his sons; Constantine received from the Almighty the order to build. Twelve vultures had given Romulus the right to call the city by his own name; the birds were eagles that showed Constantine the way to Byzantium. The son of Rhea Sylvia had traced the line of his wall with a ploughshare; Constantine marked out his with the point of a lance, and when those attending him wondered at its length, he made answer: "I shall stop when He stops who goes before me."¹ Thus we find ourselves again in the mythologic age.

Constantinople was built in four years.² With haste like this,

¹ Ducange has made a collection of the texts relative to all these legends in his *Constantinopolis sacra*, pp. 23 et seq.

² The inauguration of the city took place on the 11th of May, 330. The so-called Constantian sarcophagus, one of the finest of the Christian Museum of the Lateran, presents on the façade, represented on the opposite page, several distinct scenes. In the centre, the Christ, seated upon a *cathedra* between two apostles, holds out to one of them a *volumen*. The Sacrifice of Abraham and Pilate's Judgment occupy the two extremities. On one of the sides Jesus predicts Saint Peter's denial; on the other, he heals the sick woman kneeling at his feet, while a symbolic figure is striking a rock from which grows a tree bearing fruits. On the two sides are also represented a circular baptistery and one or two basilicas, of which the entrance is closed, according to the custom of the time, by veils or draperies. There has been



solid structures are not reared. Julian compares Constantinople to the gardens of Adonis, which, growing up in the morning and withered at night, last but a single day;¹ twenty years after its consecration, the Church of the Apostles fell into ruins. It was not because Constantine was sparing of his money; his buildings at Antioch, at Jerusalem, at Constantinople, at Reims, and elsewhere cost largely. An estimate, manifestly below the fact, states the expenses in the transformation of Byzantium at a sum equal to twelve million dollars of our money.² The taxes were increased, and their burden became the heavier because the clergy, every day more numerous, paid nothing at all, and because a portion of the public wealth was employed in giving this cult, emerged from its catacombs, the splendor which its victory deserved, each priest his support, and each community its church. Soon it will be thought necessary to have the new temples rival the old in magnificence. The enormous amount of wealth which ten centuries had heaped up in the latter became in a degree useless, and it was necessary, amid the general impoverishment, to make a corresponding expenditure for the former; without counting also that the ancient expenses for games and festivals were not at all diminished.

It has been usual to date back to Constantine the institution of those pious brotherhoods which, at Rome and in the South of France, still undertake the burial of the dead. The pagans also paid honor to the departed. Throughout the Empire associations had long existed, societies of private individuals who guaranteed that the last rites should be paid their members;³ and in every city there were *sandapilarii* and *vespillones* to carry the bodies of the poor to the funeral pile or to the tomb. The Church imitated this custom; its *fossores* even belonged to the inferior clergy. The Emperor organized in Constantinople a body of nine hundred and eighty *lecticarii*, whom he exempted "from all public charges."⁴

much discussion in regard to the interpretation of this sarcophagus. We only know that it probably represents buildings of the time of Constantine or of his sons.

¹ *The Caesars*, 24. Julian applies this comparison to the exploits of Constantine against the Barbarians, "which were merely ridiculous."

² Manso, from the work of Codinus Curopalates, *Antiq. Constant.* viii. 11. This estimate, made sixty years ago, should be doubled for the present day. Wietersheim (*op. cit.* i. 373, note 2) says sixty millions of marks for the walls, porticos, and aqueducts.

³ Vol. VI. p. 98.

⁴ *Nov. Justin.* xliii., vol. xxii., chap. i. In Saint Jerome (*Epist. 29, Ad Iov. ventum*), and

His piety in so doing has been lauded ; in reality it was a municipal service which he could not refuse to his new city.

While these marvels to which we have referred were taking place at Constantinople, others had occurred at Jerusalem.

Saint Helena, the Emperor's mother, had gone thither to distract her grief by a pious pilgrimage (327). When she asked to see the place where Jesus had been buried, it could not be shown her ; even the bishop himself had no idea of the locality. The entire ground had been for three centuries overturned by war and by peace ; buildings had been erected and then destroyed ; and Jews and Christians, driven out of Jerusalem, which had be-

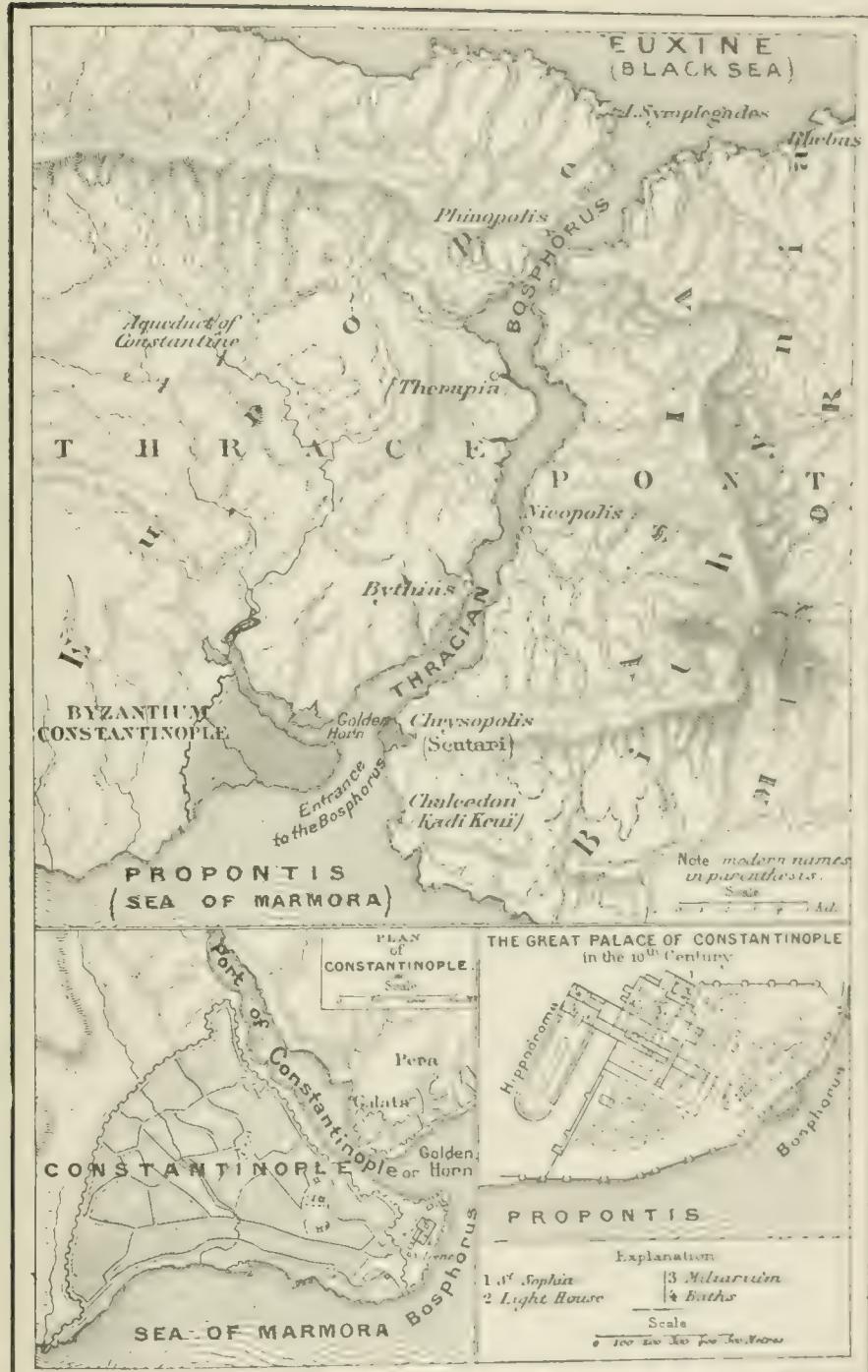


A FOSSOR (GRAVE-DIGGER).¹

come a pagan city under Hadrian, were alike entirely unable to fix the site of the scenes of the Passion. On the hill of Calvary houses were now torn down in the search ; the ruins and the ground itself were examined, and the spot thoroughly cleared, but in vain. Helena was determined, however, that some traces should be found ; and by dint of search, the holy grotto was discovered underneath a temple of Venus : suddenly three wooden crosses were brought to light. The work had been under the direction of a Jew, a shrewd man, who professed to have inherited from his ancestors a document in which were described the localities hallowed by the Passion. But of the three crosses discovered, which was that

in many places in the Theodosian Code, they are called "clergy." The Chevalier Rossi is of opinion that in the earliest centuries the *lecticarius* was identical with the "guardian of the catacombs."

¹ The inscription reads : "Diogenes, gravedigger, was laid in peace the eighth of the kalends of October." The *fossor* carries in one hand the pick, his instrument of labor, and in the other the lamp of the catacombs. Three crosses ornament his clothing. Tools are represented around him. This figure was found under an *arcosolium* of Saint Nereus in the catacomb of Calixtus. The *fossores* had for their patron Tobias.

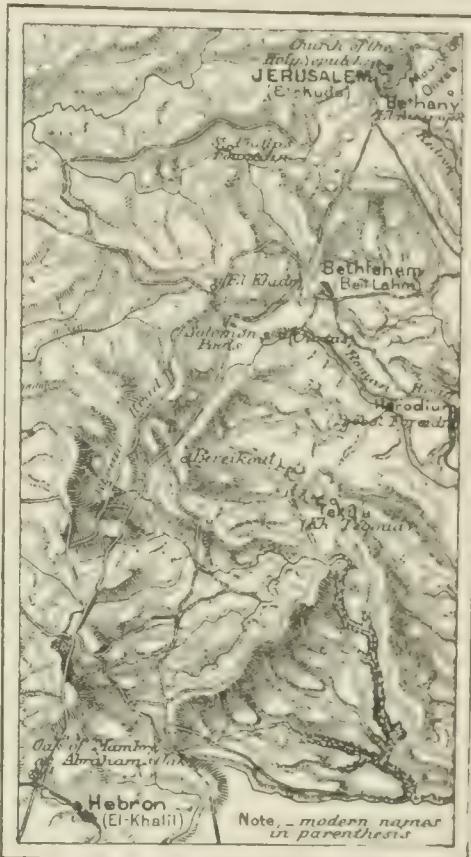


PLAN OF CONSTANTINOPLE, MAP OF THE BOSPHORUS, AND PLAN OF THE PALACE.

of the Lord? The Bishop of Jerusalem caused a woman afflicted with mortal illness to be brought to the spot; then kneeling in prayer with the Empress, he begged from Heaven a miracle. Two crosses held close to the dying woman left her still insensible; at the touch of the third she rose and walked: the virtue of the true cross had resuscitated her.¹

Eusebius of Caesarea was the metropolitan of the Bishop of Jerusalem, and, if he was not present at the restoration of the sanctuary of Christendom, he would be sure, as historian of the Church and the Emperor, to inform himself carefully of all that was done in order to restore the holy places to the Christian believers. And, in fact, he does at great length relate how the Holy Sepulchre was discovered; but he knows nothing of the finding of the true cross.²

He, who attaches so much importance to the sacred monogram, to the *labarum*, and to the cross inscribed by Constantine on the shields of his soldiers,—how could it be that he did not celebrate that discovery which justified the enthusiasm which so many of his pages testify for the ineffable merits of the *signum salutare et vici*.

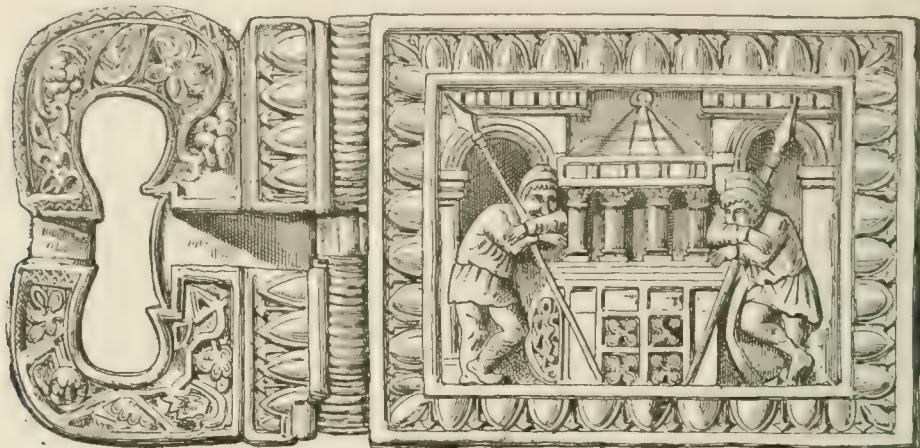


NEIGHBORHOOD OF JERUSALEM.

¹ Socrates (*Hist. eccl.* i. 17) and Sozomenus (ii. 1) say that Helena also found the nails of the cross, and that Constantine made of them a bit for his horse and a helmet for himself, — which would certainly have been most irreverent. Once on the road to holy discoveries, there was no hesitation in going forward. The remains of Saint Andrew, Saint Luke, and Saint Timothy were discovered and sent to Constantinople, where they were solemnly enshrined in the Church of the Holy Apostles. Thus began the worship of saints, — needed to these populations, who required a new polytheism to take the place of the one they had abandoned, and it was certainly much purer and more consoling than the other had been.

² *Life of Constantine*, iii. 25.

ficum?¹ He does not omit it from his narrative because Saint Helena was made to find a cross much in the way that an inexperienced visi-



THE HOLY SEPULCHRE, ON AN IVORY BUCKLE.²

tor to some famous historic locality is made to find a coin recently buried,—this ingenuity would not have caused him a scruple; he leaves the story untold for the reason that the legend was not formed till after his death,—which event closely followed the Emperor's decease.



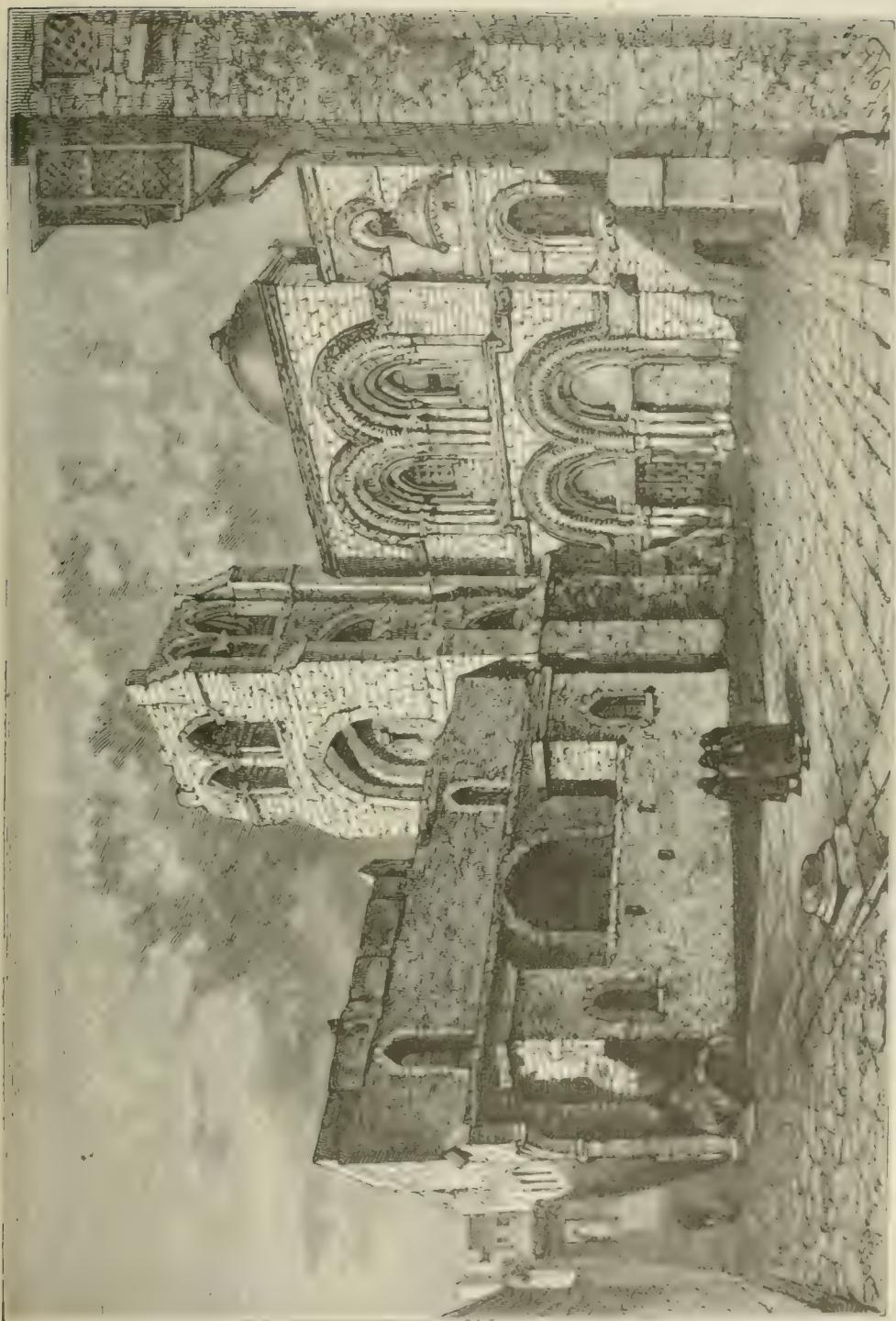
FRAGMENT OF A MOSAIC FROM THE CHURCH IN BETHLEHEM.³

at the Holy Sepulchre, upon the Mount of Olives, at Bethlehem,

¹ Eusebius, *Life of Const.* ii. 16.

² M. Edmond Le Blant, *Études sur les sarcophages chrétiens antiques de la ville d'Arles*, p. 49. It is believed that this ivory buckle, preserved in a church of Arles, and used originally to fasten a leather belt, belonged to Saint Caesarius, who died in 542.

³ De Vogué, *Les Églises de la Terre Sainte*, p. 96. Jesus seated upon an ass, his hand lifted in benediction. Behind him, an apostle; before him, children casting their garments in the road for him to pass over; another child climbing a tree to obtain palm-leaves; at the right, the people of Jerusalem awaiting the approach of the Christ, among them a woman carrying her child on her shoulder, after the manner of the Arab women of the present day.



THE PORTAL OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE, SOUTHERN PORTAL. (ON VOUD, LES PORTES DE LA VILLE SAINTE).

and under the oak of Mamre. To him the pilgrimage of Helena is a royal progress through Asia. The Empress carefully provides for the wants of the cities and provinces through which she passes, and arriving at Jerusalem, examines the work done by her son's orders.¹ But at whatever date the *inventio crucis* took place, the legend was timely. Men's minds were at that time borne forward

INTERIOR OF THE BASILICA OF BETHLEHEM.²

by a too rapid movement into the higher regions of the Christian ideal not to accept eagerly whatever supported and strengthened their faith. The generation following did not doubt the authenticity of the miracle,³ and the Holy Cross became the most precious of reliques. By the effect it has more than once produced upon the minds of kings and peoples, it even belongs to history.

¹ . . . Βασιλικὴ πρωτεῖα ἐποφεύγει (Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, iii. 12). Wilmanns' inscription, No. 1079, gives to Helena the title of Augusta. The soldiers saluted her thus, and her effigy was on gold coins (ibid. iii. 47).

² De Vogüé, *Les Églises de la Terre Sainte*, p. 49. M. de Vogüé believes this basilica to belong to the Constantinian epoch, or, at latest, to the sixth century.

³ There remain two curious manifestations of this love of men's minds at that time for the marvellous, — the poem of Juvenecus, who put the gospel into verse (Saint Jerome ad. euseb. 179 . . . *Evangelia horum versibus exponit*), and that of Sedilius, who in the next century wrote the *Paschalē carmen*, entirely upon the miracles of Christ. Their works were included in the decree of Pope Gelasius de idris regulis (494).

Aside from religious affairs, there remain, to complete the history of this reign, only an unimportant war with the Sarmatians and Goths (332), the division of the Empire among the sons and nephews of Constantine (335), and, lastly, the negotiations with Sapor II. for the protection of the Christians in Persia, and the beginning of a war with that monarch (337).

The war against the Sarmatians and Goths was not very heroic. Julian speaks of it with derision; Zosimus represents it as ending with reverses; Aurelius Victor and Eutropius, with successes;

Jordanes, with a treaty which placed forty thousand Barbarians at the service of the Empire (332). This treaty supposes more negotiations than battles, and we must understand from it an alliance between the Emperor and the whole Gothic nation. This great

GOLD COIN.¹ body of *foederati*, which henceforth made part of the Roman army, and appears to have kept at its full number, was by no means composed of captives, but of warriors whom their kings, Araric and Aoric, ceded to the Empire on the double condition of pay for their compatriots and gifts for themselves.² We cannot doubt this when we read in Eutropius that Constantine had a great reputation for bounty among these Barbarians, and in Eusebius that he gave offices and rank to the most famous among them. Themistius speaks even of a statue erected to a Gothic chief near the entrance to the Senate. That which concerns the Sarmatians or Vandals is very obscure and uninteresting, except the fact that, driven out of their own country by tribes whom they believed they had subjugated (334), they sought shelter from Constantine, who thereupon gave them an asylum in the provinces adjacent. It was the same policy, and it had the same results; twenty years later the Sarmatians ravaged Pannonia.⁴ The fidelity of the Goths held out longer; but there is no doubt that many of them aided their kindred in gaining, in 378, the battle of Adrianople, where Valens with his whole army perished.

**GOLD COIN.³**

¹ Constantine II., wearing the diadem.

² In respect to these wars, see Wietersheim, i. 386 *et seq.*, ed. of 1880.

³ Constantius II., wearing the diadem. FL. IVL. CONSTANTIVS PERP. AVG.

⁴ Sozomenus, iii. 1, *ad ann. 355.*

Two years before his death Constantine, without abandoning the supreme control, made a division of his provinces. His three sons were already Caesars: to the eldest, Constantine II., he assigned Spain, Gaul, and Britain; to the second, Constantius II., Asia, Syria, and Egypt; and to Constans, the youngest, he gave Italy, Africa, and Illyria. Of Thrace, Macedon, and Achaia he made a kingdom for his nephew, the Caesar Delmatius; the other, Hannibalianus, received Pontus, Cappadocia, and Lesser Armenia, with the title of king.¹ The Empire had come to be a family estate, divided up at will among his heirs by the proprietor. This is very unlike the great policy of Diocletian. Constantine had made three wars, he had shed torrents of blood, and killed two Emperors, in order to reconstitute the Empire single and indivisible, and he now tore it into five fragments, without preparing in his lifetime ties which after his death should unite the chiefs of the new pentarchy. It seems, in fact, though this we cannot certainly say, that it was an actual dismemberment. The names of the Emperors will indeed be inscribed at the beginning of laws, and probably in the general measures of government the two kings will remain, one under the orders of the sovereign of Asia, the other under those of the master of Illyricum. But of the three Emperors, which one will take the chief command? Evidently no one of the three. How will the four prefectures be divided among them? Who will hold the new capital? Will it be the master of Thrace, Delmatius, one of the subordinate kings? Only the sword can decide these questions. Constantine had left to his sons the example of his own life, counselling them to ambition and civil war with far more energy than his testament counselled them to moderation and peace. We shall shortly see the results of this inconsiderate policy.

Since their great defeat by Diocletian, in 297, the Persians had shown a respectful fear of the Romans. At the date of which we are now speaking, Sapor II., the son of Hormisdas and grandson of Narses, a young man twenty-seven years of age, was full of military ardor

HORMISDAS.²

¹ We have coins with the legend: *Fl. Hannib. regi.* (Eckhel, viii. 204).

² Diademed head of the king, and the legend: "The worshpper of Ormuzd, the exeller" Hormisdas, the king of Iran and Turan, a celestial soul." (Gold coin.)

and religious zeal. The magi had just completed the work they had begun by the destruction of the Arsacidae.¹ About the time when Constantine was causing his bishops to prepare the *Credo* of Nicaea, Sapor promulgated as the law of Iran the *Aresta*, or Book of the Magi. "Since our law is now clearly set forth," he says in his edict, "let no man again fall into a false doctrine."² Thus the two Empires accomplished almost at the same moment a religious revolution. It was the signal for furious wars to break out between them.

Sapor at first tried his strength against the Arabs. He defeated the hordes who were in the neighborhood of Babylonia, ravaged Yemen, and terrified his enemies by his cruelty. The rôle of conqueror, attractive to his pride, was needful also for his security. Christianity had made great advances in the Persian provinces all along the eastern and southern frontier; Armenia had been Christianized, and the Persians could no longer count upon the tribes of the Caucasus for assistance in case of need, for the Iberians, having adopted the new faith, were allied more closely than ever to Rome. This evangelization made the magi anxious for their religion, and Sapor for his crown. He was aware that the conversion of Constantine gave the Romans auxiliaries in the very heart of Asia; the relations of the Emperor with the Hindoos seemed to prepare other perils on the eastern frontier;³ and Hormisdas, a Persian prince who had taken refuge at Constantinople, might prove in the hands of the Roman party a dangerous tool. A letter of Constantine commanding to Sapor the Christian subjects of the latter, excited further distrust.⁴ Before entering upon open hostilities with his powerful neighbor, Sapor sought to make sure of Armenia, whose king, Diran, was the vassal or ally of the Romans. The Persian governor of Atropatene allured this monarch to a conference, seized him, and put out one of his eyes. This kingdom, so long desired, having thus fallen into his power, Sapor again demanded from Constantine the five provinces across the Tigris:

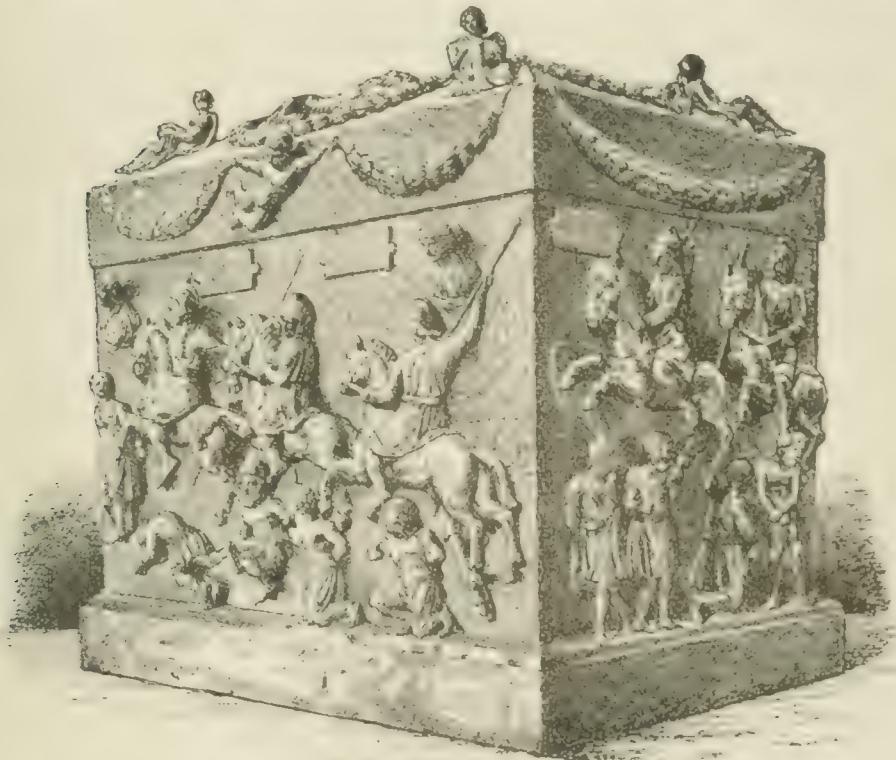
¹ See p. 132.

² De Harlez, *Avesta*, p. 36.

³ Eusebius (*Life of Const.* ii. 50) speaks of an Indian embassy which came to Constantinople, and Cedrenus of a journey into India made by an agent of the Emperor, the philosopher Metrodorus, to which Amm. Marcellinus makes allusion (xxv. 4).

⁴ Eusebius, *ibid.* iv. 8.

the Emperor, like Trajan, replied to the envoys that he would carry his answer in person. This was a declaration of war. While the ponderous Roman army was gathering, the swift horsemen of Sapor entered Mesopotamia; but hearing of the great prepara-



SARCOPHAGUS OF SAINT HELENA (SO CALLED), OF RED PORPHYRY.¹

tions making in Syria, they returned across the Tigris with their spoils (337).

Eusebius, terminating his most untrustworthy narrative by a falsehood, represents the Persians imploring peace and Constantine generously granting it.² Sapor had more pride, and Constantine less confidence. At this moment, moreover, the latter was

¹ Vatican Hall of the Sarcophagi, No. 589. The four sides represent a battle, the conquerors occupy the upper part, the prisoners are trodden under foot by the horses, or are closely bound, their hands behind their backs, etc. M. Barbier de Montaillou, the Parisian berlinaise, says, in the Catalogue of the Museo Pio-Clementino, that the body of Helena was deposited in this sarcophagus. For the tomb of a woman and a saint, the decoration is singular.

² *Life of Const.* iv. 57.

drawing near to the tomb,—whither emperors and peasants alike descend: and the road was sad to him, for he was to bequeath to his successors on the Oriental frontier a war destined to last a quarter of a century, and in the interior anarchy which his heretical baptism caused. As death approached, he accepted this rite from Eusebius of Nicomedeia, the friend and partisan of Arius. He who summoned the Council of Nicaea died, therefore, a Christian, but a Christian of the Arian faith,—that faith which most resembled the religion of his fathers; that also which has been most vigorously combated by the Church.

The Emperor died on the 22d of May, 337. His body was carried from Nicomedeia to Constantinople with the usual pomp. He was buried, as his mother had been, in a porphyry tomb in the Church of the Holy Apostles which he had built. Constantius, the only one of his sons who was present at the funeral, had not received baptism; he was therefore obliged to leave the church with his pagan guards before the religious ceremony began,—which brings to notice the singular fact that Constantine himself, remaining so long unbaptized, was never able, up to his latest day, to be present at a service of the Church.¹

¹ The first canon of the Council of Valentia (374) refers to the custom of requiring the catechumens to leave the church before the celebration of the Mass. Saint Ambrose, shortly after this, wrote to his sister: "When I had sent away the catechumens and given baptism to those who were to receive it, I began" (*Epist. ad Marcell. sor.*). Saint Jerome enumerates five orders in the Church, — bishops, priests, deacons, believers, and catechumens. "The catechumens," says the Abbé Corblet (*Hist. dogmatique . . . du baptême*, i. 444), "occupy a middle place between the believers and the unbelievers; they are neither in the Church nor out of the Church, but midway."

Reverse of a coin of Constantine II. representing the serpent transfixed by the staff of the *labarum*.



COIN OF CONSTANTINE II.²

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